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THE NEW YORK MONTHLY ▶ MAY 1990

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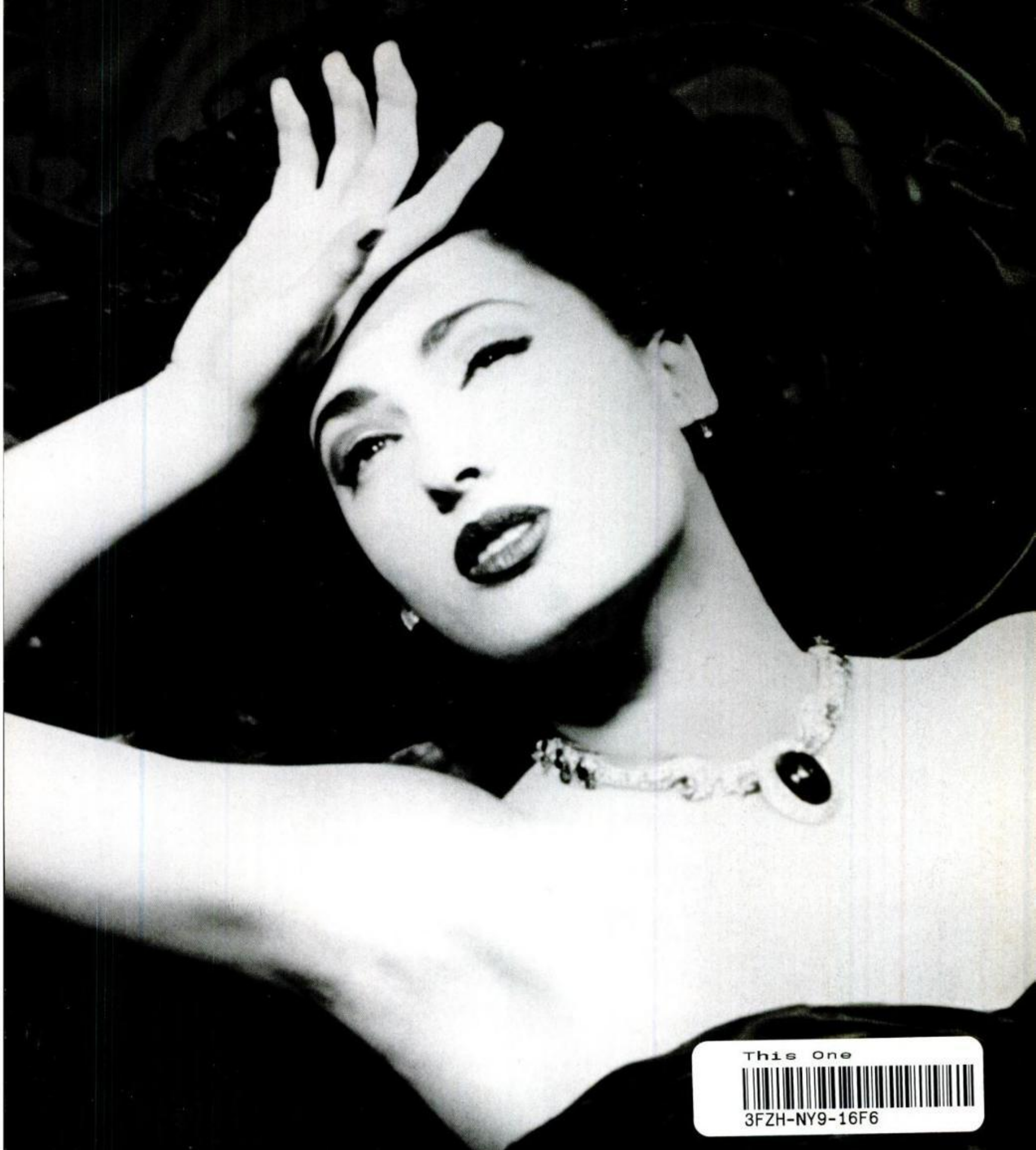
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# SPY

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Photographs by Carolyn Jones and Marty Katz (head). Grieves & Hawkes suit available at Barneys New York. Styled by Barbara Tfrank.

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MAY IS SPLENDID IN WASHINGTON—THE EXPANSES OF IMPECCABLE GREEN, THE GROVES OF ginkgo and oak, the shirtsleeves weather. But who has time to wander gaily or breathe deeply when there's the Product Liability Reform Act to fret about? "Of course Washington takes itself too seriously," the American Enterprise Institute's Norman Ornstein told us when we called for a quote that would confirm our superficial, unexamined preconceptions about his city. It's certainly

safe to say that Washington knows less than zero about blitheness. 🐟 Bill Moyers no longer lives there, but if the essence of Washington is a certain overearnest tance, he's still a resident in spirit. In fer's new memoir Moyers is portrayed Johnson toady who acquiesced as about CBS News coverage of the Viet- threatened to smear Safer as a Asked recently about the charge, issued a new, nicer, 1990s form of *No comment*: "He'd rather not react," Moyers's mouthpiece told *The New York Times*. 🐟 The polite stonewall, the emphatic denial: in New York the paid apologists for Covenant House were issuing nineties-speak as



self-impor- Morley Sa- as a Lyndon LBJ, angry nam War, Communist. Moyers is-

well. "I don't think it's a criminal thing," Fa- ther Bruce Rit- ter's lawyer said about reports that Ritter had operated an ille- gal \$900,000 slush fund that made loans to his sister and two Covenant House board members. "Bruce Ritter," said Covenant House chief officer James Harnett, "wasn't into cash." And when Phil Donahue dissembled recently about *his* alleged sin— hosting a TV show on recreational dwarf- tossing in bars—he used the more classic innocent-bystander denial: "I didn't toss the dwarfs," said the famously lapsed Catholic. 🐟 Just across Fifth Avenue from Donahue, John Cardinal O'Connor, whose need to proscribe is nearly as powerful as his hunger for the limelight, has revealed that the Roman Catholic church is mad: his priests have per- formed two successful exorcisms in recent months. By the way, O'Connor says Linda Blair's head-spinning, bed-levitating, vomit-suffused depiction of satanic possession in *The Exorcist* is "gruesomely authentic." Two thumbs up from America's leading exorcism expert, and Blair still has to make *Bedroom Eyes II*.



during an official visit to Chile

"You're so sick." — Marilyn Quayle to Dan Quayle as the vice president bought an erect-penis trinket



It's safe to say we know less than zero about the relationship between superstitious theology and Hollywood careers.

We *do* know that New Yorkers believe in funerals with serious production values, about one a year—for Averell Harriman (1986), Andy Warhol (1987), Steve Rubell (1989) and, using up this year's allotment early, Malcolm Forbes. The police outside St. Bartholomew's Church recognized Richard Nixon, of course, but how were they supposed to know who David Rockefeller was? They recruited Sirio Maccioni, the owner of Le Cirque, to act as a kind of maître d', letting the authorities know which mourners were fabulous enough to let in.

Of course they let in Liz Smith—Liz Smith the columnist-critic-philanthropist. Soon she'll be able to add talk show host to the résumé: she's working with the Republican media consultant Roger Ailes on a series of TV specials to be called *Liz Smith Profiles*, one of the first of which will be a portrait of Wayne Newton. Smith plus Ailes plus Newton: it's safe to say we know less than zero about the actual program, but the collaboration is enough to make you believe in satanic possession.

Ailes is not without virtues: unlike many of his Reaganite colleagues, for instance, he is under no threat of criminal indictment. Arlin Adams, the special prosecutor now investigating former HUD secretary Samuel Pierce, was a federal judge—but he sounds a lot like the federal jurors in the Oliver North trial, whose chief qualification was ignorance of current events. "Please don't tell Dan Rather this," Adams, who is 69, told a reporter, "but I don't watch the evening news anymore. I just didn't pay much attention to [the] HUD [scandals]."

Maybe it's fitting that the man in charge of ferreting out corruption under Ronald Reagan is a proudly oblivious old man. George Bush, on the other hand, pays attention to TV. "I've seen that show," the president said when he met a producer of *America's Funniest Home Videos*. "Those clips are pretty funny." The program is, of course, the unqualified hit of the TV season, and its executives are talk-

ing about licensing the show to Europe (*Benelux's Funniest Home Videos?*). Yes, America may have abdicated TV and VCR production to the Japanese (indeed, it seems safe to say we know less than zero about manufacturing), but at least we're still the showmen to the world—with the exception of *America's Funniest Home Videos*, which is derived from and pays a fee to the Tokyo Broadcasting System's *Fun With Ken and Kaito Chan*.

And also with the exception of the Saturday-morning cartoon version of *Alf*, which is made in Japan as well. A viewer taped an episode that included an explosion and, freezing the action by chance on replay, noticed that one frame showed the Statue of Liberty and the word AMERICA. The Japanese animation company admitted to sneaking the frame in, but they were murky about their intent. "I don't know if Americans would understand," said the company president, "but some-

times we like to"—we can almost see the menacing grin—"play around."

So the Axis powers are, 45 years later, consolidating their victory, while the erstwhile superpowers

are reduced to scoring debating points off each other. Secretary of State James Baker, testifying in Moscow before a committee of the Supreme Soviet—their equivalent of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, minus Jesse Helms—said, "The United States has not used force in Latin America, except for this Panama situation, since 1965." As soon as some committee members started whispering "Grenada, Grenada, Grenada"—one of those pesky exceptions again!—Baker demonstrated just what a master dissembler he is. "Unless," he added, "you want to talk about Grenada as a use of force." The Soviets nodded and, like a scene from a very stupid James Coburn movie from the 1960s, said, "Da, da, da." Not long afterward, like a subplot from a somewhat less stupid Peter Sellers movie from the 1960s, the Lithuanians were negotiating with Gorbachev to effect an unfriendly, \$33 billion leveraged buyout of their

country.

It's safe to say we know less than zero about Soviet macroeconomics, but the Soviet Union clearly has the largest pool of potential Elvis impersonators—overweight substance abusers in 1970s clothes—on earth. In the U.S., of course, the Elvis-impersonation industry is so advanced that a whole branch of the law is devoted to Elvis-related litigation—in Cleveland a plagiarism suit between two *faux* Elvises resulted in the defendant's singing "Burnin' Love" in an actual courtroom.

There is not, with the possible exception of the kid who mows our lawn, anyone who professionally impersonates the hard-rock demistar Ted Nugent—but on the other hand, Elvis never published his own magazine. First came *Lear's*, then *Mirabella*, and now *Ted Nugent's World Bowhunters*. The cover of the debut issue features a photograph of Ted and his family with bows and arrows; there is an anti-animal rights editorial by Ted and another article by Ted in which he explains that he only eats meat that he kills himself. It's safe to say we know less than zero about the sort of people who bow-hunt *and* like Ted Nugent.

Nugent is plainly not a 1990s man. But he may be an early-twenty-first-century man, if things turn out to be as *Mad Max*-like as Washington's Worldwatch Institute is predicting. Their new *State of the World Report* says that if we don't stop ruining the natural environment before 2030, "environmental deterioration and economic decline will be feeding on each other, causing social structures to disintegrate."

The environment can deteriorate, the economy may dislocate and social structures disintegrate (*memo to SPY Record Division: Investigate ecology-related rap song potential*), but at least now, just in time for the end of the millennium, we know that the really important structures—with the possible exception of Bloomingdale's—are deep and permanent. Galaxies, it turns out, are not randomly scattered throughout the universe, as everyone had thought, but exist in very regularly spaced clumps. "The regularity," astronomer David Koo says of the new discovery, "is just mind-boggling." According to astrophysicist Marc Davis, assuming the new findings are correct, "it is safe to say we know less than zero about the early universe." Speaking for ourselves, it has always been safe to say that. ▀





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From the SPY mailroom: Maybe it's because we've temporarily relocated to Washington (D.C., not Heights or Connecticut or anywhere near Issaquah), but the events in Eastern Europe have finally caught up with us in the SPY mailroom.



Now we too find ourselves being swept along by that unyielding tide of humanity demanding what are, after all, basic human

rights and freedoms—and we don't mind telling you, it's hard to do that while slicing open envelopes, checking for movie-screening invitations to swipe, answering Walter Monheit™'s fan mail and trading on SPY's name to promote our music careers.

First we got a letter the New Dramatists group had sent to Czechoslovakia's Vaclav Havel. "Congratulations! The playwrights of America salute you!" it began, and it concluded with "And when you are able to return to the loony world of theatre may you continue to battle the perennial looniness of the hacks, bureaucrats and ideologues because they will never be in short supply. May the fierce mockery of your plays always torment them!" It was signed by 38 playwrights, whose relentless enthusiasm barely concealed their letter's sad, inexorable subtext: *None of us will ever, ever be president of the United States.*

Next, Marcin Bochiński of Gdynia wrote to us: "I'd like to subscribe to your magazine. Please, send me all information about that including conditions of sending to Poland." Aha—the motivation behind all that Soviet-bloc upheaval becomes clear. We're delighted to send subscriptions across the Iron Curtain, though what Marcin Bochiński will make of such curiosities as Henry Kravis, Jon Peters and Shirley Lord remains to be seen. (It's probably worth noting that if our mail is to be believed, reading SPY is permissible in Gdansk and Bucharest and even Ljubljana...but not in facilities administered by the Florida Department of Corrections.)

Liz Smith stringer and siren-about-town Mimi Kazon, a woman who lives for boldface type and boldface type alone, has sent SPY a thank-you note for mentioning her yet again in the Liz Smith Tote Board (January). A thank-you note▶

DEAR EDITORS Just wanted to thank you for choosing me for "SPY Salutes the Stars of Tomorrow Today" in the November 1989 issue. I really do appreciate your thinking of me. I did hear from a cousin who read the piece. I really enjoyed hearing from him after many years.

Bob Brivic

New York

DEAR EDITORS Regarding flag desecration and politics ["The Star-Spangled, Windshield-Wiping, Stir-fried Banner? Making the Flag Safe for the 1990s," by Bruce Handy, December 1989], might the U.S. Postal Service be a suspect? On their recent "Bill of Rights" stamp, an artist has dared to depict a sort of *Reader's Digest* condensed flag, with only 6 stripes and 33 stars. And as if that isn't bad enough, they've put it on—depending on your interpretation—the eagle's shield, back or underbelly.

I believe their other stamp, with a waving flag on it, may also be short of stars and stripes.

Scott Dunn

New York

*The U.S. Postal Service has evidently heard all this before, from philatelists and hyperpatriots alike, and is quick to explain that the Bill of Rights stamp "is not intended to represent the*

**LETTERSTOSP**

*U.S. flag" but just an American eagle partial to red and white stripes and white stars on a blue background. On the other hand, the "Flag With Clouds" and "Flag Over Yosemite" stamps are, as their names suggest, open to interpretation as stamps with flags on them, and thus contain the regulation number of elements.*

DEAR EDITORS Your December issue denigrates the very real threat posed by flag desecration. Maybe that's because you have never confronted this incipient menace face-to-face.

I have. Astride a noisy video game called *Arkanoid* in a neighborhood bar-and-grill, I observed a heinous assault on our national symbol. It seems that the successful *Arkanoid* player must, by any means necessary—including lasers—utterly obliterate a crude video likeness of Old Glory!

I immediately brought this abomina-

tion to the attention of the owner. He shrugged, as if to imply, "Hey, asshole, it's only a video game." And to think I actually once shot a rack of pool with the seditious bastard!

Outraged, I phoned the Missouri Attorney General's office, only to learn that the woefully undermanned agency *doesn't even have* an Arcade Subversion Unit. Undaunted, I convened an emergency poker game with some friends to discuss possible sanctions against this treasonous eatery operating unchecked in our own backyard. While agreeing unanimously that a boycott was out of the question (the food is too good), we pledged to regularly stiff the waitress and, upon leaving, to refuse to push in our bar stools.

Paul Sandberg

Kansas City, Missouri

DEAR EDITORS I discovered SPY about a year ago and decided to subscribe in 1990. Three items in your January issue convinced me to do this: (1) "Our Master's Voice: A Gala Three-Part Citizens' Guide to the Breezy New World of Presidential Lingo"—I burst out laughing on the train to work upon seeing the first illustration, and several people glared at me; (2) "There's No Business Like Show Business: The Chilling, Unabridged Mike Ovitz-Joe Eszterhas Correspondence Annotated by Celia Brady" (I'll patronize all Eszterhas movies from now on, no matter who stars in them); and (3) the letter from the Vail, Colorado, reader whose funny Anglo name I can't remember.

Thomas Javorcic

Berwyn, Illinois

DEAR EDITORS Like me and the Man was rappin' down at the crib (that's White House to you, punk) 'bout that Kennebunkport-Hip-Hop Translation Dictionary ["Yo! Bush Be Gangbangin' Like a Homeboy," by Martin Kihn, January], and we thought you left some out:

William F. Buckley Jr., e.g.—slice

Bloody Mary—ice

Lee Atwater—Professor Griff

Carolyn Ruth Weinstein

Astoria, New York



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DEAR EDITORS I noticed another annotation you could have made to the Ovitz-Eszterhas correspondence. Eszterhas quotes Ovitz as saying, "This town is like a chess game....If the king goes, the knights and pawns will follow." That's a pretty bad analogy, no matter what Ovitz meant.

Either a knight or a pawn necessarily "goes" (moves) first in any chess game. The king follows the other pieces, usually remaining well behind them as long as possible.

Ovitz was more likely thinking it should be easier to win the lesser pieces after the king has been captured (after it "goes"), but his analogy still fails. The king cannot be captured in chess, only mated, and once it is mated, the game is over and there is no time to capture other pieces.

It is surprising that such an earnest disciple of *The Art of War* would be so confused by the basic rules of a board game.

James Schilleman  
Flushing, Michigan

DEAR EDITORS In regard to your comments on Jon Peters's not being qualified to run a movie studio because he was a hairdresser [The Usual Suspects, January], I am outraged! What qualifications does one need to produce horrible, crappy, inane movies geared for a four-year-old mentality, and then have enough gall to charge \$7 a head to see the stuff? Being a street thug is a better qualification, I would say, to run a movie studio.

As a former Jon Peters hairstylist, I can tell you that we do work for our money, which is more than I can say for the movie-studio heads. And besides, \$7 in the salon will get you a conditioner, which is much more entertaining than most movies I've seen lately.

Alexis Pittman  
West Hollywood, California

DEAR EDITORS The opening of your article on celebrities ["The State of Celebrity 1990: A Special Report on What America Thinks About Celebrities, What Celebrities Will Do to Keep Themselves Celebrated, What Nobodies Will Do to Become Famous and Why Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Public Can't Stand Woody Allen," January], which be-

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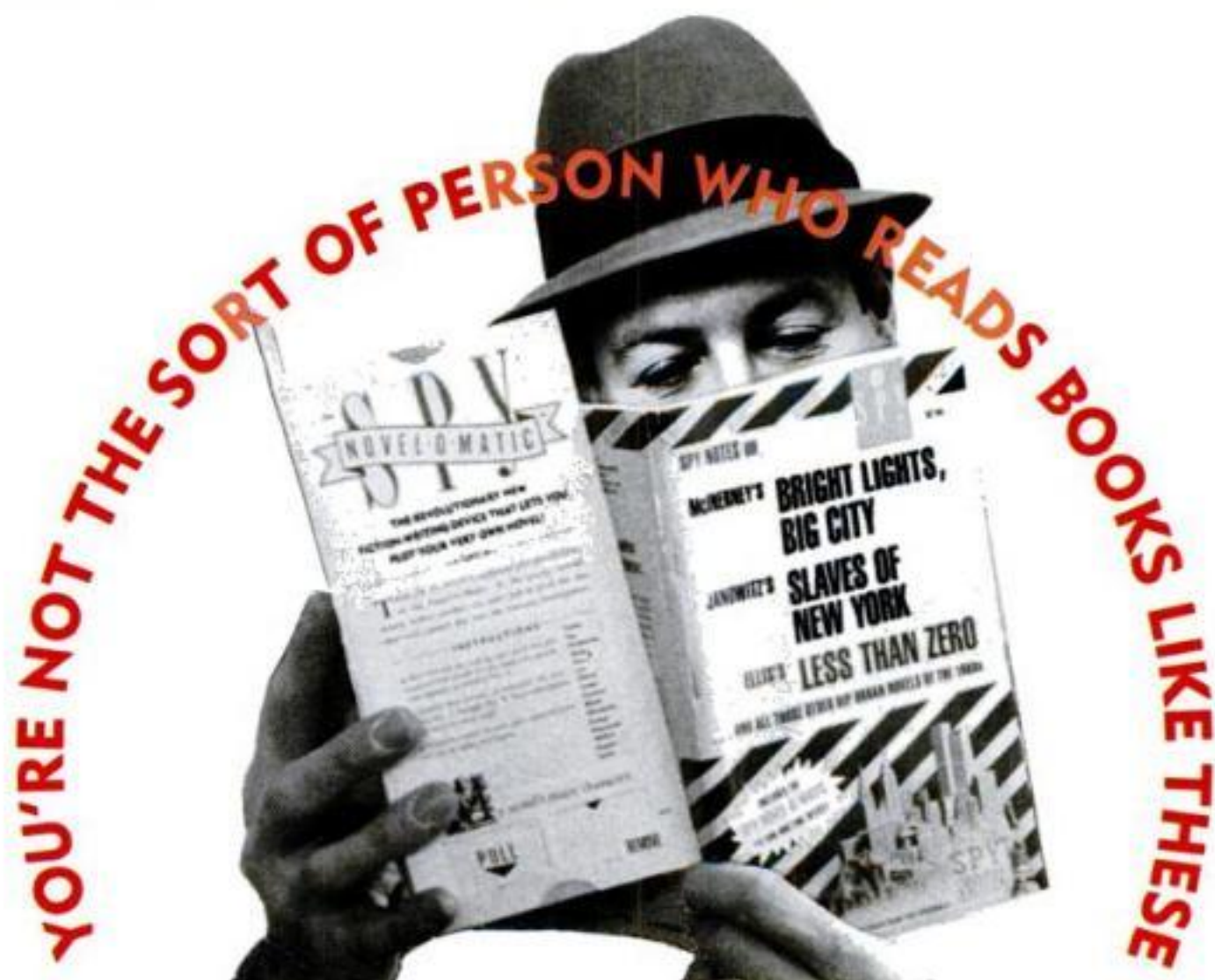
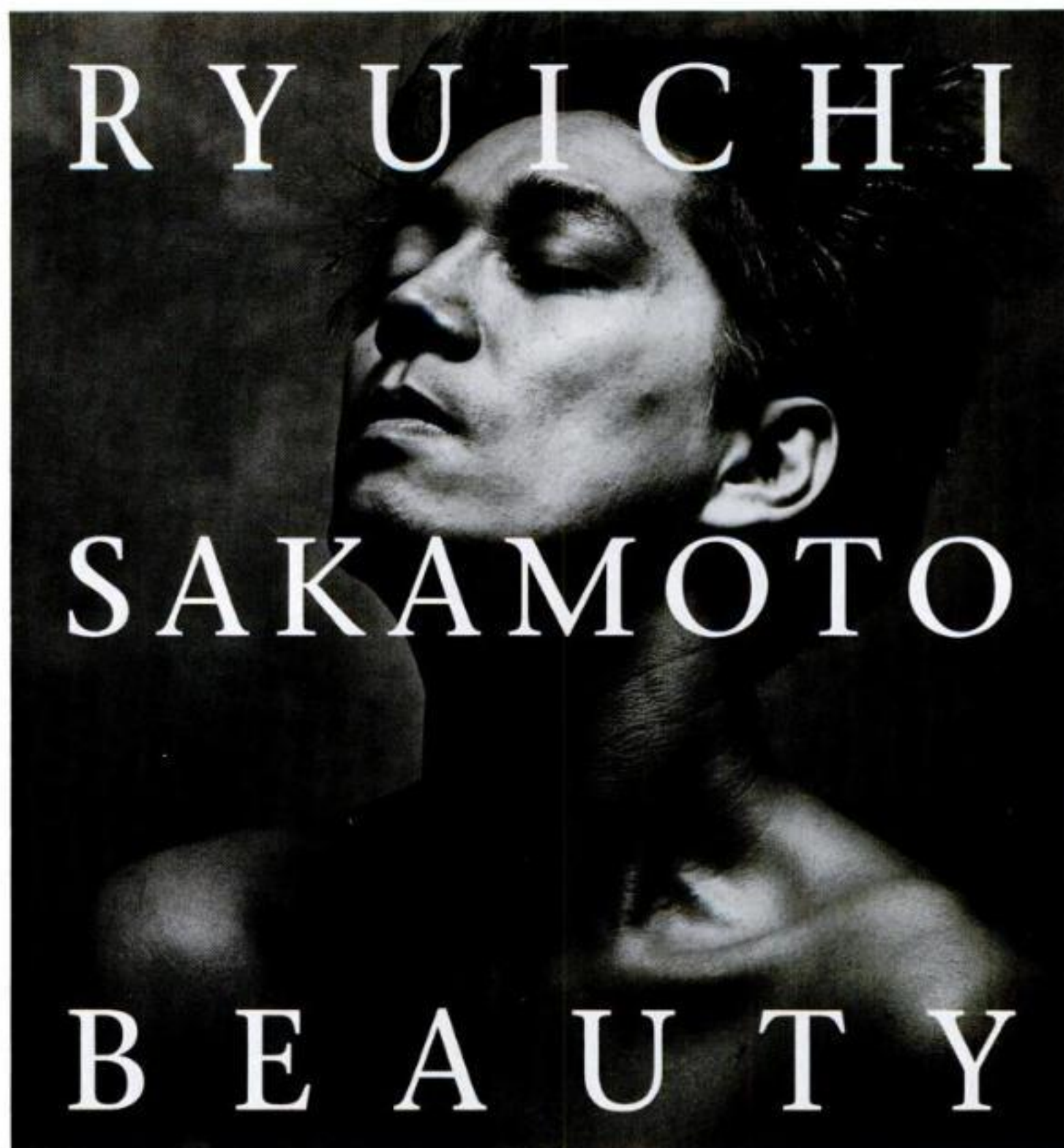
also followed Kazon's previous Tote Board appearance, in 1986. Ever gracious, she is even rumored to scribble thank-you notes to journalists who mention her in private conversations. At this moment she is probably uncorking her red Magic Marker and deciding whether to go with four exclamation points or five. (Five, Mimi. More grabby.)

Speaking of the publicity-shy, the president of a cosmetics firm recently and unaccountably wrote to us, "On several occasions, you have attended a press conference and have been very accurate in your coverage of our news... Therefore, we would like to offer you a special opportunity to be present at the unveiling of a technological breakthrough which we feel will change the world of cosmetics." His firm, he went on to say, has a product that is nothing less than "the most innovative ever," which it's introducing on "a day of historic proportions" at a breakfast to which "I am personally inviting you... and [a] small group of other professionals." By now the product is figuratively (and perhaps literally) on everyone's lips. You know what we're talking about—you must. It has—incredibly—*changed the world of cosmetics*. And to think we passed up that breakfast.

SPY contributing editor Harry Shearer won't be getting invited to any breakfasts Kimberly-Clark is throwing. "Dear Mr. Shearer," wrote the company's trademark counsel not long ago, "In early 1987, you may recall that Kimberly-Clark Corporation objected to your unauthorized use of audio portions of a Kimberly-Clark sales teleconference which you had intercepted using a satellite dish. You had played the audio on WLUP radio in Chicago and consequently caused extreme consternation to the Corporation and its employees whose comments during the sales meeting you ridiculed."

Shearer, it seems, has been at it again.

"In the September 1989 issue of SPY magazine," wrote trademark counsel Nancy Lee Carter, "there is a piece about your collection of tapes ['Yes, but Just How Many Times Can You Watch the Final Episode of *Joanie Loves Chachi*?—The Harry Shearer Alternative Museum of Broadcasting'] which specifically names the 'Kotex Sales Force Teleconference, 1987' as being part of that collection. The tape is also referred to as the



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gins with the not-so-startling statistic that 41 percent of America believed Red Skelton was already dead (I fell within the 41 percent, I must admit), reminds me of a paragraph from an essay by Evelyn Waugh called "Half in Love With Easeful Death," about life and death in southern California:

Here on the ultimate sunset-shore they warm their old bodies and believe themselves alive, opening their scaly eyes two or three times a day to browse on fruits and salads. They have long forgotten the lands that gave them birth and the arts and trades they once practiced. Here you find, forgetful and forgotten, men and women you supposed to be long dead, editors of defunct newspapers, playwrights and artists who were once the glory of long-demolished theaters, and round them congregate the priests of countless preposterous cults to soothe them into the cocoon-state in which they will slough their old bodies. The ideal is to shade off, so finely that it becomes imperceptible, the moment of transition.

*Elliott Milstein  
West Bloomfield, Michigan*

DEAR EDITORS I noticed in your article "Looking Good—Unnaturally Good: A SPY Surgical History of Celebrity, Vol. I" [January] that breast-enlargement operations outnumber reductions 16 to 3. There seems to be a violation here of the conservation of mass. Where did the extra flesh come from? Did the three celebrities with reduction operations (Loni Anderson, Ursula Andress, Dolly Parton) lose enough flesh for the other 16 operations to take place? Are there vast colonies of unknown Americans deliberately being fattened up so that they can serve as breast-flesh suppliers to the stars?

*Stephen Welch  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*

DEAR EDITORS Iman's publicist should make a point to read Iman's press. Despite the publicist's denial, Iman *did* have breast implants and *did* go public. From the October 1989 *Vogue*: "I didn't have the breasts done for my *work*. I had them done because I *wanted* to."

*William McEwen  
Irving, Texas*

DEAR EDITORS Good move putting those red letters on the fax you want us to send to the Chinese ["Play a Prank for Freedom! SPY Allies With Liberty-Loving Magazines Worldwide to Paralyze Communications in China," January]. They ought to show up real well on their fax machines.

*Dom Colotti*

*Bernardsville, New Jersey*

*Uh... Dom? You sure you're not thinking of type on a red background faxing badly?*

DEAR EDITORS Don't you guys have anything better to do with your time than spending hours breaking the balls of one of the last great prose stylists of our time [Review of Reviewers, by Henry "Dutch" Holland, January]? Gracious, all I'm trying to do is to teach fellas how to Be Interesting and Dress Right and Form Bold Opinion, etc. If as a result of your carping I am shunted into the frigid clime of the unemployed, and my old lady is reduced to fetching oat-bran bagels for Lee Eisenberg, I hope you will be satisfied. And as for "Dutch" Holland, he stunk when he pitched middle relief for Cincinnati in 1947 and he stinks now.

Hurt as I am, I will forgive everything if you can arrange a private Polaroid session with Dianne Brill for me. Bet you won't even do that!

*Richard Merkin*

*Gentlemen's Quarterly*

*New York*

*Maybe we'd better make that two private Polaroid sessions—see page 92.*

DEAR EDITORS Just thought I'd let you know how much I enjoyed Henry Alford's exposé of the World of Poetry [Poetry, January]. Though his insidious poem, "I Am in the Egg; Hello? Hello?" was unanimously praised at the organization's convention, I decided to let my fifth-grade students critique it. Here are some of their comments. I think your readers will find their honesty refreshing:

"It is stupid because it is like just cramming alot of words about eggs together."

"It makes me feel like haveing a omlet."

"It makes you want never see a poem by him agian!"

"It's is totally stupid because it does not ryhm or make sence."



A full-page photograph of two women running along a sandy beach. They are seen from behind, moving away from the viewer towards the ocean. The woman on the left is wearing a blue athletic cap, a blue sports bra, and blue high-cut athletic shorts. She has a black wristwatch on her left arm. The woman on the right is wearing a red athletic cap, a blue sports bra, and red high-cut athletic shorts. They are both smiling and looking back over their shoulders. The ocean waves are breaking on the shore to their left.

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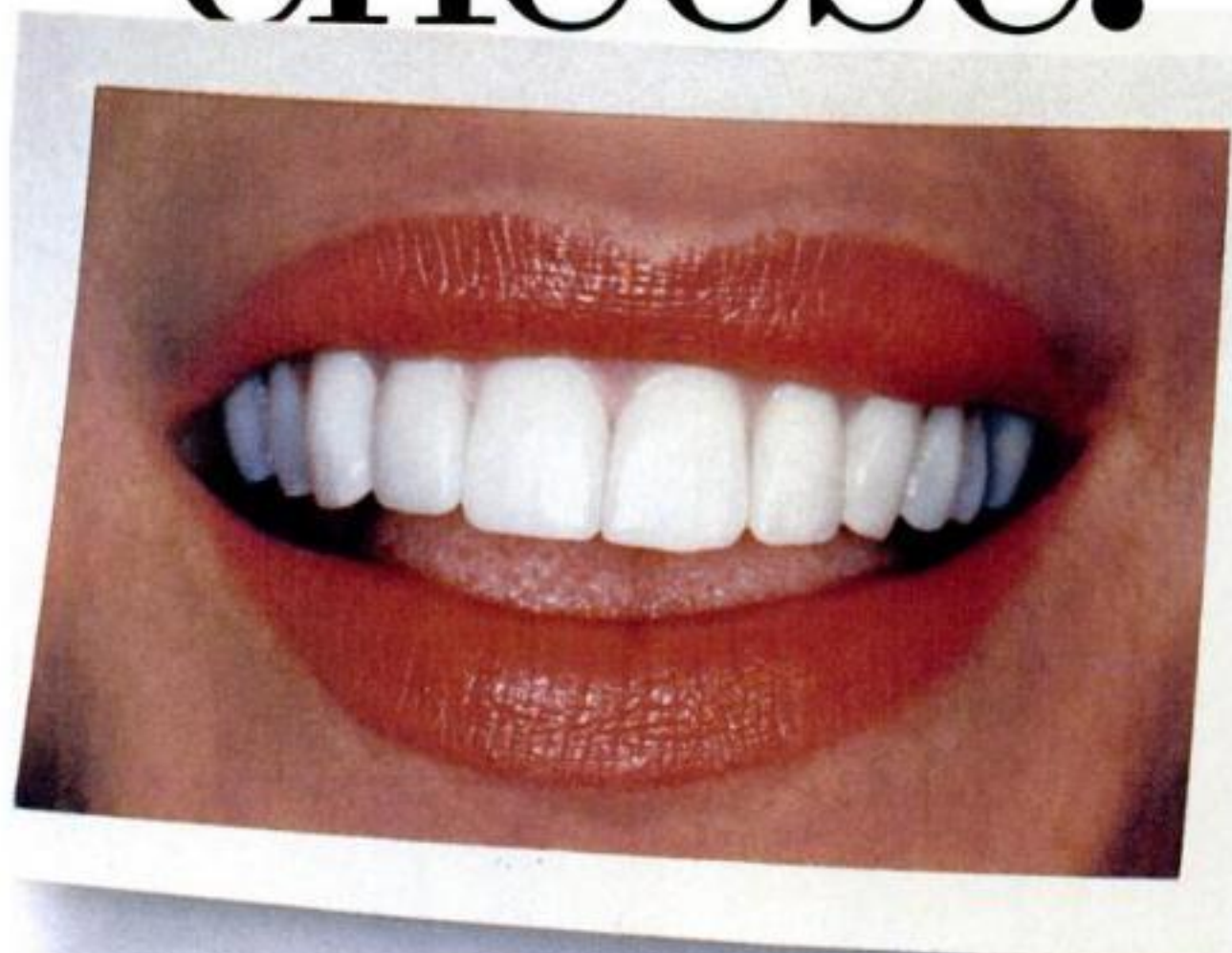
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math score of 779 is either an honest mistake or pathetic.

*Gracie Koo*

*Cambridge, Massachusetts*

*Hey! James Woods may be a lot of things, but he's no liar! Once upon a time, Gracie, when your parents and Woods and the editors of this magazine were in school, SATs were scored differently.*

DEAR EDITORS I felt obliged to respond to John Burg's comparison of Michael Dukakis to Frank Burns [Letters to SPY, January]. Surely the similarities between George Bush and Frank Burns are much greater. At certain angles, there is even a certain "Separated at Birth?"—quality physical resemblance. More important, there is a personality resemblance that goes beyond their goofy right-wing posturing. The prospect of Bush lashing out à la Burns ("Doggie-doo on you, Hawkeye/Jim Wright!") seems unsettlingly plausible.

In addition, both Bush and Burns tend to whine rather than speak, and both have last names that begin with the letters *B-u*.

*Pierre Saadeh*

*Clinton, New York*

DEAR EDITORS I enjoyed reading Joe Queenan's "Joyride: How I Parlayed the Editorship of Three Horrible Publications into a Half Decade of Free Food, Free Travel and Pointless Conversation With the Leaders of the Free World" [February]. I wish there had been more.

I've been wondering why Queenan left his job and what his boss, Ralph Ginzburg, thought of all this (or did he even know?).

*Tim Muck*

*Seattle, Washington*

*Joe Queenan tells us he left because he'd decided he was "old enough to have a real job." And Ginzburg, he says, has a great sense of humor.*

DEAR EDITORS **R**egarding the coming fiscal Armageddon as postulated by Richard Stengel in "Free Mike Milken" [February]: what are you going to do when the roof finally falls in? During the Great Depression John Steinbeck wrote, somewhat bitterly, "When people are broke, the first things they give



Toback together, the former having shed the latter for nonpayment of dues and for leaving in a state of considerable disarray the bedrooms he'd occasionally rent.

Finally, a letter that longtime SPY readers will agree needs no comment, from Robert L. Balliot of Bradford, Pennsylvania. "An obvious omission from the last issue's look-alike column," he wrote, meaning well, "is that of Leona Helmsley and Liberace." ☺

# CORRECTIONS

In the June 1989 Trade column, SPY stated that photographer Lynn Goldsmith worked on a song with Soviet rock musician Boris Grebenshikov and that she tried to slip a tape of that song into the pocket of Raisa Gorbachev. In fact, Goldsmith approached Grebenshikov about working on an antinuclear song that she was involved with, but he declined the opportunity to work with her. Goldsmith claims she never tried to slip a tape of one of her songs into Raisa Gorbachev's pocket.

The column also raised a question about where contributions to Goldsmith's Will Powers Institute were deposited. A Will Powers Institute bank account does exist, although it is still unclear how the contributions are handled. Furthermore, Goldsmith asserts that the contributions to the institute are so small that she has to cover many of the expenses personally.

The column stated further that although Goldsmith photographed Keith Richards specifically for *Musician* magazine, pictures from the shoot appeared simultaneously on the covers of two European magazines. In fact, *Musician* had nonexclusive rights to the shoot, and a photograph from the shoot (but one different from the one used by *Musician*) subsequently appeared on the cover of just one European magazine.

The article also stated that Goldsmith tried to charge *Time* for a photo shoot of Roseanne Barr that Goldsmith had done exclusively for the comedienne's memoir. According to Goldsmith, the photographs were submitted to *Time* by Roseanne Barr's management and were returned to Harper & Row the same day. A price for the photographs was never discussed. ☺

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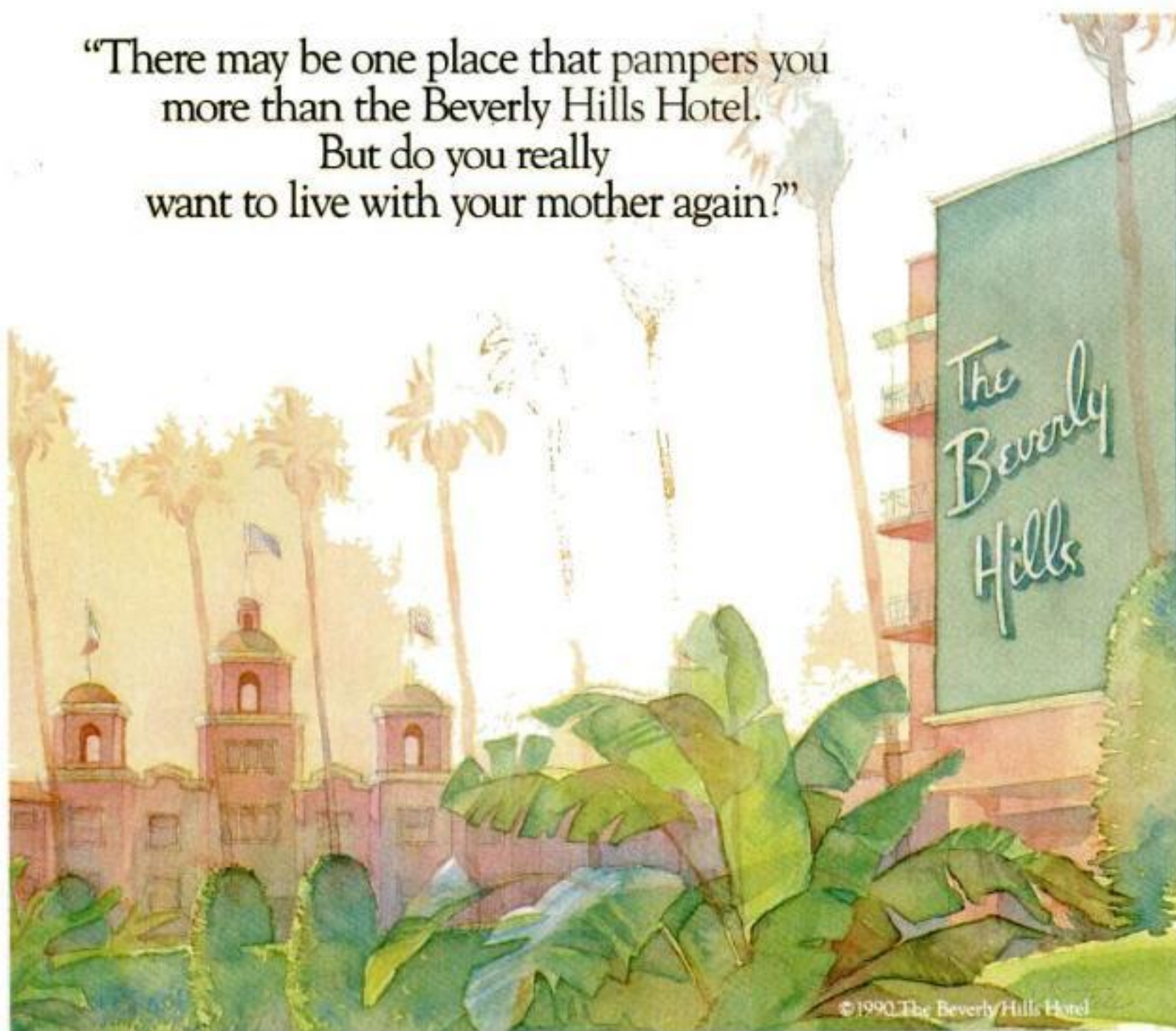
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up are books." I would think that the second things people give up are satirical monthlies that specialize in making fun of the eyebrows of the rich and famous ["Just Say No-Brows—Today's Peculiar Fashion for Overtweezed Bonsai Eyebrows," by Karen Harrison, February]. People tend to lose their collective sense of humor during times of burgeoning national malaise. Remember TV during the 1970s? Is *SPY* in the nineties going to end up like H. L. Mencken in the thirties, bereft of influence and scorned by the teeming millions who once hung on your every sarcastic utterance?

R. W. Rasband  
Heber City, Utah

No.

DEAR EDITORS **N**an Kempner and her useless, raw-throated, bulimic, Inez Bavardage-like cronies needn't worry about being a dying breed ["Party Animal," by Susan Orlean, February]. Why, just this last academic year Vassar College students lobbied to start a *Future Housewives of America* club; that is really the kind of thing I expect to happen in the United States of America.

Steven P. Gorney  
New York

DEAR EDITORS **I**'ve finally come to the conclusion that the gray-shaded *From the SPY Mailroom* column is one of the best portions of your monthly. But why, in *SPY*'s ever-redeeming format wisdom, is it always placed on the inside of the page, obfuscated in a single column, then awkwardly carried over through three pages to finally arrive at the conclusion, which usually contains some tricky quip?

Also, is *From the SPY Mailroom* a joint effort or by a single writer? I always thought mailroom people were kind of dull.

David J. Jutt  
New York

Well, as my—our—mother likes to say, "You live and learn."

DEAR EDITORS **R**egarding Celia Brady's *Industry* column in your February issue: The *Daily Variety* articles that I filed about Jeremy Zimmer

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were mentioned in a front-page story in the weekly *Variety* without any source attribution. At the time, I thought this odd. However, shortly thereafter I was dismissed by *Daily Variety*, whose editor complained that my reporting style wasn't sufficiently "aggressive."

Correspondents for the *Hollywood Reporter* were also present at the event where Zimmer spoke, but they didn't see fit to mention it until after my article (apparently) precipitated his "leaving" ICM.

David Ebreinstein  
Los Angeles, California

DEAR EDITORS I was at a trendy dinner party a couple of weeks ago when I met a really stunning blond. We started talking, and the conversation turned toward some of those fashionably hip urban novels by Tama Janowitz and Jay McInerney. I was unfamiliar with the works in question, but I hoped the beautiful blond would enlighten me. Instead she became as cold as ice. "Idiot," she hissed, "how could I ever allow myself to be seen in public with someone who doesn't understand the angst of being young and world-class hip?"

With that she turned on her heel and left.

I stared at her retreating back with a mixture of shame and envy. *If only I could read and understand Less Than Zero*, I thought. *But alas, I have no time to wade through countless novels.* So it was with heavy heart that I made my way up to Mulholland Drive, on my way to my (formerly) hip and (now-not-quite-so-) cool apartment. What should my wandering eyes behold but... a bookstore! In L.A.!

I paused in front of the Hip Urban Novel rack, despairing at the amount of reading I'd have to do, when lo and behold I came upon a copy of *SPY Notes*.

A week later I met the beautiful blond again at another trendy party. This time, however, I was ready. I effortlessly tossed off lines like "Jamie's trading in his sunglasses for fresh bread symbolizes his rejection of the nightclub life" (page 9). In no time at all I was the life of the party. Thanks to you, *SPY*, I can now pontificate more authoritatively than ever. After all, nobody else here in L.A. has read those books, either.

Terry Dickerson  
Long Beach, California

DEAR EDITORS Recent international developments have indicated a decline in the power of various communist governments and their shifting toward "democratic reform." As these formerly communist countries become increasingly similar to their "democratic" counterparts, tensions between these countries have naturally decreased. This relaxation of tensions has been most tangibly manifested in the dismantling of the wall dividing East and West Berlin.

While peaceful coexistence between formerly hostile countries may at first seem favorable for the future of world civilization, some drawbacks may soon become evident. For example, the effects of the decrease in world tensions are already being felt in cutbacks in defense-industry spending, and a concomitant loss of thousands of jobs; several military bases have already been closed.

But perhaps the most deleterious effect is more subtle. To quote Orson Welles in the film *The Third Man*:

In Italy for 30 years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland, they had brotherly love; they had 500 years of democracy and peace — and what did that produce? The cuckoo clock.

The Committee to Re-Erect the Wall believes the decline in world tensions will result in a pervasive and overwhelming sense of international complacency. To believe all is well in the world because a wall representing differences between competing ideologies has been torn down seems inane in view of the fact that we are members of a civilization that hasn't even figured out a way to keep itself from being buried under a growing proliferation of nonbiodegradable Big Mac containers.

We would like to see the Berlin Wall put back up, to serve as a symbolic confirmation of the existence of world problems and thereby help sustain an ultimately healthy amount of international paranoia.

The Committee to Re-Erect the Wall  
Chicago, Illinois

*SPY welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to SPY, The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003. Please include your daytime telephone number. Typewritten letters are preferred. Letters may be edited for length or clarity.*

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## THE USUAL SUSPECTS



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## THE FINE PRINT

by Jamie Malanowski

### ROYALTIES FOR CONGRESSIONAL FELONS

As you may suspect, being a member of the Senate or the House of Representatives is a pretty good deal. You get a big office, or rather offices (up to 1,000 square feet), and staff (up to 100); you can subscribe to almost any magazine you want and write it off as an official expense; and you get called Honorable no matter how pathetic you are. One of the best perks is that if you manage to remain in office for a couple of terms, as all but those who are exceptionally unlucky or unqualified do, you become eligible to enjoy one of the most lucrative pension plans yet devised. The payments, based upon the number of years served and regularly adjusted to reflect increases in the cost of living, are startlingly generous. Former Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield collects \$11,334 a month. Carl Albert, the gnomish, ineffectual former speaker of the House, pulls down \$8,317 a month. Politically disgraced presidential aspirants Barry Goldwater, George McGovern, Eugene McCarthy and Walter Mondale collect \$5,575, ▶

THE DWEEBISH, SELF-SERIOUS WORLD of public-affairs television can now breathe easier: **JOHN McLAUGHLIN**, the jowly overseer of his own syndicated Sunday-morning shouting contest and his own syndicated interview show, is *not* going to jail. McLaughlin recently settled out of court a \$4 million sexual-harassment suit filed against him and his company by **LINDA DEAN**, his former executive assistant. On the day the agreement was announced, McLaughlin, rejuvenated by the manageable amount of the settlement (see page 72), found himself in a chatty mood during an elevator ride with several women, including a current assistant. So, said the former Jesuit priest to the assistant, *how do you feel about kinky sex?*

**DAN RATHER** ISN'T THE ONLY ANCHORMAN given to spooky, quasi-New Age behavior. **PETER JENNINGS**, his better at ABC News, was recently in the capital's Dirksen Senate Office Building to have his annually renewable Capitol Hill press pass drawn up. When it came time for his identification photo to be taken, Jennings sat down and asked his portraitist to wait a moment. The photographer watched, befuddled, as the emotionless, omniscient Canadian dropped his head in his lap, spent a few seconds in apparently rapt concentration, then suddenly whipped himself upright and screamed, "Now!"

THEY MANAGED TO UNLOAD **ROD "ATTITUDE" STRICKLAND** on the San Antonio Spurs, but the New York Knicks still have one unrepentantly troublesome point guard. **MARK JACKSON**, who was forced earlier this year to pay a \$5,000 fine after NBA commissioner **DAVID STERN** caught wind of his friendly wagers with Philadelphia 76ers forward **CHARLES BARKLEY**, was very much in on the action during a recent road trip. Upon taking off from Milwaukee the day after winning against the Bucks one night in March, Jackson and some teammates began playing a furious in-flight game of cards at \$20 a

hand. Their fun continued feverishly while the plane descended and touched down at La Guardia airport, ending only when the flight attendants opened the aircraft doors for passengers to exit.

LIKE **CZAR NICHOLAS II** BEFORE HER, *CBS This Morning* castoff **KATHLEEN SULLIVAN** spent the final days of her doomed, erratic regime living it up and damning the consequences. During a taxing junket to New Orleans to "cover" last January's Super Bowl, the increasingly zaftig broadcaster had a whoopin' good time with her CBS-assigned chauffeur—so whoopin' good, in fact, that she requested the same driver for her next out-of-the-studio assignment, in Miami and Orlando. The prurient want to know: did the pair's reunion approximate the limo action of *No Way Out* more closely than that of *Driving Miss Daisy*? For the 48-hour period the driver was at Sullivan's beck and call in Miami, he billed CBS for 44 hours of service.

SELDOM IS A REFERENCE BOOK ENTRY as intriguing as **OLIVER STONE's** listing—or, rather, listings—in the 1989–90 Writers Guild of America directory. The first mention of Stone appears in the main section of the directory and catalogs his array of movie credits (*Platoon*, *Born on the Fourth of July*). However, one citation is not sufficient for Oliver Stone—his name crops up two more times in an affirmative-action appendix of writers who have asked to be categorized as belonging to "protected classes." Stone, the son of a prominent Wall Street stockbroker, grew up on the Upper East Side and now occupies a comfortable place on Hollywood's A-list, yet, improbably, his name is registered under *two* separate protected classes—both "American Indian" and "Asian." "That's crazy," his own publicist told us when we called. "Oliver's mother is French.... His father was American Jewish." But being a publicist, the publicist called back the next day with a clarification: "There is Indo-Asian blood on his father's side."



## “NO, NOT TONY ROBERTS AS COMMERCE SECRETARY — LINDA LAVIN”



*What If the President of the United States Were a Playwright?*

**T**he election of playwright Vaclav Havel to the presidency of Czechoslovakia in January gave many of us pause. Americans all know what happened to our country when we elected an *actor*; what would be the consequences of voting in a playwright?

### MONDAY

President suggests testing strength of new MIRVed nuclear missile by trying it out first in New Haven.

### TUESDAY

President likens upcoming covert operation to delicate *ensemble piece*.

### WEDNESDAY

President suggests livening up dreary Cabinet meetings with cabaret material and two-drink minimum.

### THURSDAY

President expresses dismay that none of his

speeches are ever revived regionally.

### FRIDAY

President asks speech writers for short, comic curtain raiser; intended speech is “not quite a whole evening.”

### SATURDAY

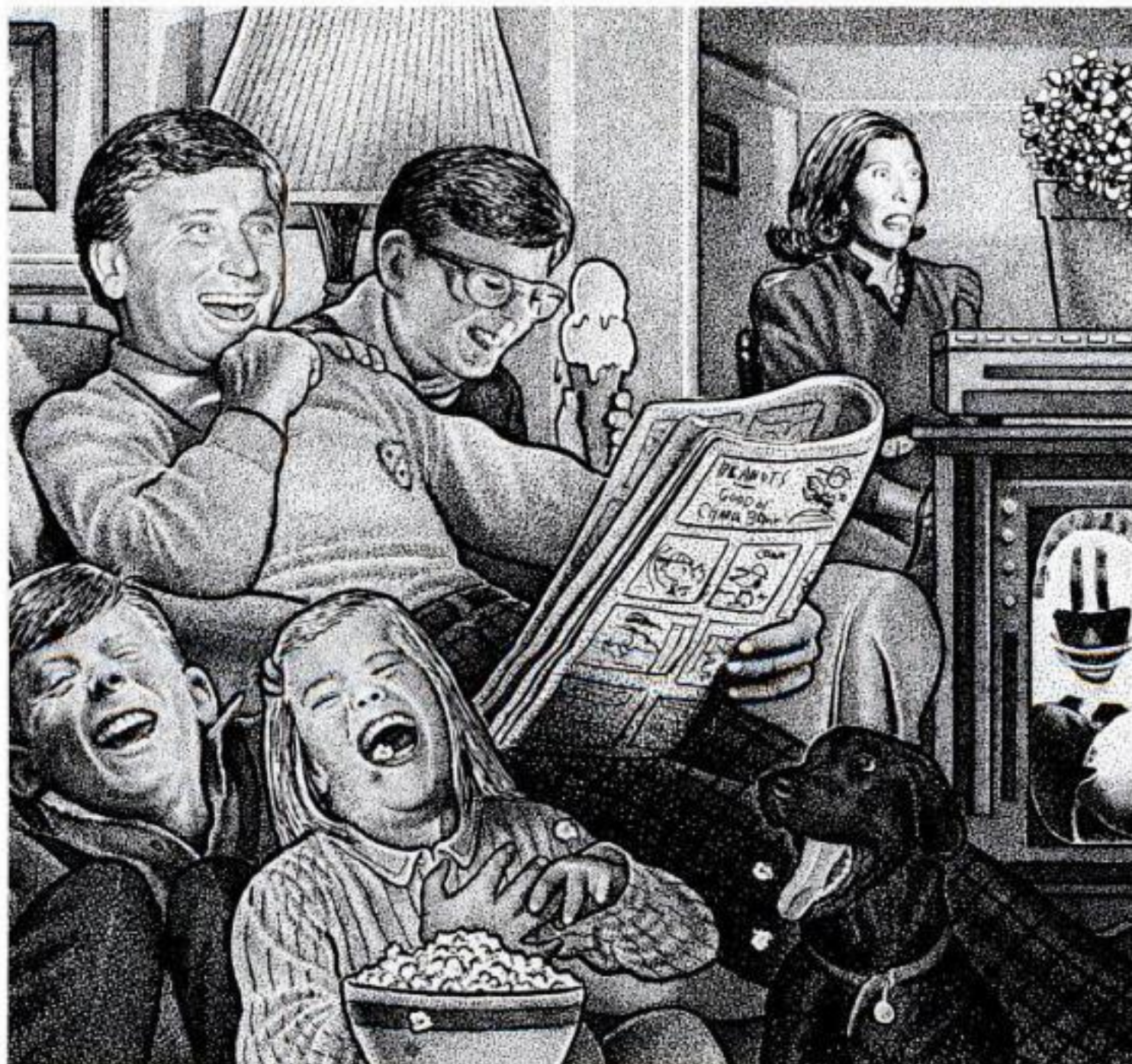
*Crossfire* guest Frank Rich refers to failed foreign policy as “bittersweet, Chekhovian.”

### SUNDAY

President realizes in the middle of his State of the Union address that no one is listening to him; asks chief of staff, “Darling, could we lose the dancers, *please?*”

—Henry Alford

## PRIVATE LIVES OF PUBLIC FIGURES



*America's second family enjoys some Sunday-afternoon quality time at home.*

ILLUSTRATION BY DREW FRIEDMAN

## THE SPY LIST

James Jesus Angleton

Pat Buchanan

Fred Buzhardt

David Eisenhower

David Gergen

L. Patrick Gray III

Alexander Haig

Bobby Ray Inman

Martha Mitchell

nobody

John Paisley

Brent Scowcroft

Ben Stein

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

\$3,924, \$5,156 and \$3,086 each month, respectively. Richard Nixon gets \$2,916 for his mere six years of congressional service (walking-around money compared with his presidential pension). The man dubbed “the Dumbest Senator” by *New Times* in 1974, William Scott of Virginia, pockets \$5,951 a month. So generous are the payments that former Maine senator Margaret Chase Smith and the complete nonentity Ben Reifel (a South Dakota congressman in the 1960s) have collected more than \$1 million each, as did the late Albert Gore, father of the current senator, whose postman brought him a monthly check worth about \$7,000 once his constituents had thrown him out. Even Bella Abzug collects \$553 a month, for the six years she spent terrorizing nearly everyone who crossed her path.

Perhaps the best part of this dole is that you can be convicted of taking bribes, of theft and of other crimes yet *still* get that monthly check from the government. Currently, 14 felons are receiving benefits earned during their criminal days on Capitol Hill. Here they are, along with the amounts of their monthly federal checks:

Ex-representative Mario Biaggi (D-N.Y.), convicted of taking payoffs: \$3,066

Ex-senator Daniel Brewster (D-Md.), who pleaded no contest to charges of taking an illegal gratuity: \$915

Ex-representative Charles Diggs Jr. (D-Mich.), who took kickbacks from his staff and misappropriated government funds: \$4,139

Ex-representative John Dowdy (D-Tex.), guilty of perjury: \$5,031

Ex-representative Joshua Eilberg (D-Pa.), who ▶





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accepted a bribe from a hospital seeking a government contract: \$2,008

Ex-representative Cornelius Gallagher (D-N.J.), an income tax evader: \$4,408

Ex-representative Richard Hanna (D-Cal.), convicted of taking a bribe from Korean businessman Tong-sun Park: \$3,035

Ex-representative George Hansen (R-Idaho), convicted of failing to disclose financial holdings: \$2,726

Ex-representative Henry Helstoski (D-N.J.), convicted of taking bribes: \$1,328

Ex-representative John Murphy (D-N.Y.), convicted of taking a \$50,000 bribe during the Abscam investigations: \$4,042

Ex-representative Bert Podell (D-N.Y.), who pleaded guilty to a charge of conflict of interest: \$762

Ex-representative Fred Richmond (D-N.Y.), who pleaded guilty to charges of tax evasion, marijuana possession and paying bribes: \$1,510

Ex-senator Harrison Williams Jr. (D-N.J.), convicted of taking mining stock as a bribe during Abscam: \$4,060

Ex-representative Wendell Wyatt (D-Okla.), who pleaded guilty to violating campaign spending laws: \$2,203

And then there's ex-senator Herman Talmadge (D-Ga.), who receives \$4,329 a month even though he was "denounced" by the Senate for siphoning campaign contributions into a personal account.

On the positive side, Death recently relieved the Treasury of having to make payments to two felons, ex-congressmen Daniel Flood and Frank Thompson Jr., but not before they were sent more than \$510,000 and \$450,000 in public funds, respectively. On the negative side, we have not yet

**N**ew York is a tough town, with hard rules that brook few exceptions. Consider the taxi fare system. The amount you pay is based on distance and time, no matter what points you're traveling between, no matter who you are. An obese man with luggage, four anorexic models, a child on crutches, it doesn't matter—everybody pays the same freight.

Washington, D.C., on the other hand, is a political town. *You have constituents and I have constituents. He has interests and she has interests. We have demands and they have concerns. Come, let us reason together.* Consider the capital's taxi fare system. A 65-block ride in Manhattan is likely to cost about \$8. In Washington it's anybody's guess. For in Washington, fares are determined not by mileage but by how many of the 26 taxi fare subzones one goes through. With 26 subzones that can serve as points of origin and 26 subzones in which one can disembark, there are 650 possible interzonal journeys. There are nine different preset fares, with surcharges: with a few exceptions, rides confined to one subzone are \$2.65; two subzones, \$3.60; and so on, to a maximum of \$8.90. Plus surcharges. So if George Bush wants to take a taxi the next time he needs a checkup at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, that's a four-subzone ride from 1A to 4C and should cost him \$5.40. If Bob Woodward wants to meet some secret source at the State Department, it's a two-subzone ride between the Post and Foggy Bottom; but since the 23rd Street entrance to the State Department is just across the subzone's boundary line, Woodward could save himself 95 cents by getting off at 22nd and walking a block.

Now let's talk about surcharges, which are deter-

mined, says the American Enterprise Institute's Norman Ornstein, by "a cabdriver who has his own arcane ways of figuring things out." Let's say you want to take a cab across town, from Capitol Hill, in subzone 1D, to Dan Quayle's house, in subzone 3A. That would require going through three subzones and thus would run you \$4.50. But let's say that instead of traveling by yourself, you bring along Lloyd Bentsen (add \$1.25), and that instead of hailing the taxi, you call ahead (add \$1.00). Let's say Bentsen trips and falls getting into the vehicle and causes a one-minute delay (add 75 cents). You have a trunk (add \$1.25) and two bags (add 15 cents), and it's 4:30 p.m., which means that it's rush hour (add \$1.00). As you race toward your destination, a small, bearded man, perhaps a GS-13 from the Department of the Interior, hails your cab. He is going roughly your way, so your driver picks him up (perfectly legal and with no discount to you). Suddenly it starts to snow, an act of God that as a general rule throws Washingtonians into a panic. While you calm down the senator and the guy from Interior, your driver exercises his snow-emergency privilege and doubles your subzone fare (add another \$4.50). He then makes a slight detour to accommodate the civil servant, who departs, paying the full fare (without your surcharges). You finally arrive at your destination, whereupon your driver helps you unload the limping and still somewhat snow-shocked Bentsen (add 65 cents for personal service). You pay the cabbie \$15.05 and marvel at a taxi system every bit as efficient as the rule-writing bureaucrats and loophole-allowing legislators it serves. —Andrea Rider

## TEN YEARS AGO IN SPY

**"Why not put rock music on TV? I don't mean *Shindig* or *Hullabaloo*, or even *The Midnight Special*. I mean an entire channel devoted to rock—24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Like radio, but with pictures. The kids who buy records spent their entire childhood glued to *Scooby-Doo*. With 'rock 'n' roll videos' on TV, they'd never have to leave the house again. I might even watch it myself."**

—from "How to Save the Recording Industry," by David Owen, SPY, May 1980



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*Our Monthly Anagram Analysis*

### STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE

DISINTEGRATE FIVE CITIES?  
NEAT

### BUDGET DEFICIT

IT'D FEED BIG CUT

### NELSON MANDELA

LEAN AND SOLEMN

—Andy Aaron





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# COKIE ROBERTS — MODERATELY WELL KNOWN BROADCAST JOURNALIST OR CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE?

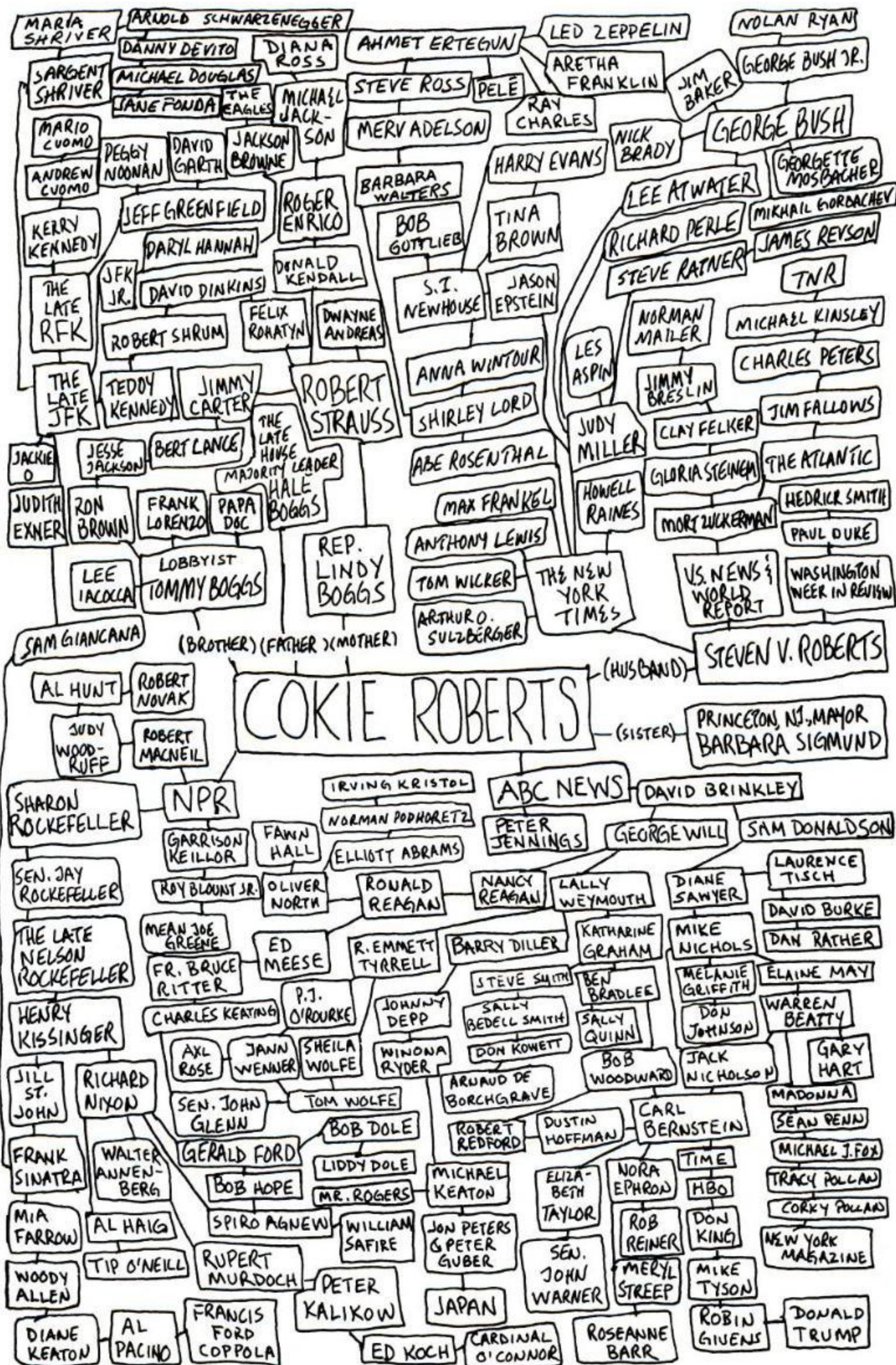
THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

begun to pay such criminals as ex-congressmen John Jenrette Jr., Richard Kelly, Raymond Lederer, Michael "Ozzie" Myers and Robert Garcia, none of whom has reached retirement age.

## HOW TO STAY IN CONGRESS: HOLD A BULL ROAST, FIX YOUR VAN, SHOUT "GO, BOILERMAKERS!"

When last we examined the campaign expense reports that representatives and senators have to file with the Federal Election Commission [June 1989], we found that in addition to spending the money contributed to them—those nickels from hopeful schoolchildren, those thousands from hopeful PACs—on consultants and pollsters, the almost automatically reelected legislators spend it on several categories of goods and services, including animals, knickknacks and tchotchkes, and automotive expenses. More-recent rummaging through the files shows that those categories remain popular and that whole new trails of dubious expenditure have been blazed, as well:

**Live Animals and Assorted Foodstuffs.** Representative Leon Panetta (D-Cal.) spent \$288 in 1987 to buy a lamb. Representative Wally Herger (R-Cal.) spent \$456.62 for unspecified "livestock at fair." Representative Mike Espy (D-Miss.) bought \$483.71 worth of catfish. Representative Larry Craig (R-Idaho) spent \$65 on potatoes. A pair of Maryland Democrats, Representative Beverly Byron and Representative Steny Hoyer, each sponsored a bull roast. Byron spent \$457.48 on her roast, Hoyer considerably more: \$16,245 for "food for bull roast," \$359.80 for "beer for bull roast," \$1,500 for "catering for bull roast," \$645.75 for "speaker







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"tar," 0.8 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, by FTC method.



## LOGROLLING IN OUR TIME

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

system for bull roast," \$175 for "D.J. services at bull roast," \$360 for "bull roast expenses," \$202.31 for "bull roast supplies" and \$700 for "bull roast"—in other words, a \$19,000 bull roast. Representative Ronnie Flippo (D-Ala.) bought \$600 worth of chicken stew.

Purged speaker of the House Jim Wright chided his campaign committee for the following expenses, which he charged on his American Express and Discover cards: "McDonald's—food—\$2.02; Whataburger—food—\$2.07; Burger King—food—\$2.93; Burger King—food—\$5.92; Whataburger—food—\$3.98; Crumphy's—food—\$4.47."

**Knickknacks and Tchotchkes.** Representative Bill Gray (D-Pa.) spent \$1,285.69 on nine separate purchases of lined walnut boxes. He also spent \$1,500 to "travel to Korea to see a constituent" and \$200 for the services of a "disco jockey." Representative Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) spent \$327.45 at The Treasure Chest in Somerset, Kentucky, on "mementoes." Another fan of "mementoes" is Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del.), who spent more than \$16,000 on these items, buying many from a Wilmington emporium called The Enchanted Owl.

**Automotive Expenses.** Representative Helen Bentley (R-Md.), imitating (though with far more success) the van strategy of Senator Lowell Weicker, which was highlighted in this space last year, spent \$92.92 on "van repairs," \$20 to "repair van," \$150 on "van repairs," \$163.64 on "van repairs," \$118.65 on "van repairs—brakes," \$168.85 on "van repairs" and \$20.95 on "Oil Change van."

**Vegetation.** Representative William Ford (D-Mich.) spent \$518 on trees. Senator Mark Hatfield

**"A loving and very accurate portrait of our national pastime."**

—Frederick Exley on Christopher Lehmann-Haupt's *Me and DiMaggio*

**"A singularly moving, entertaining, funny book."**

—Lehmann-Haupt on Exley's *A Fan's Notes*

**"A fine and generous book, wonderful in the abundance and subtlety of its observation, remarkable for its humor, honesty, and wisdom. It is a joy to read."**

—Lewis Lapham on Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's *Italian Days*

**"Blessedly cantankerous, stylish, elegant, erudite, unpredictable, cosmopolitan, cranky...and ultimately, wonderfully wise."**

—Harrison on Lapham's *Money and Class in America*

**"A beautiful piece of work."**

—Richard Yates on Dan Wakefield's *Under the Apple Tree*

**"Nothing less than a masterpiece."**

—Wakefield on Yates's *The Easter Parade*  
—Howard Kaplan



## CELESTIAL HINDSIGHT

Special Sydney Omarr Edition

**Subject:** SAMUEL PIERCE, FORMER HUD SECRETARY  
**Sign:** Virgo (b. 9/8/22)

**Date:** February 1, 1990

**Notable Activity:** Attorney general requested that a special prosecutor be appointed to investigate preferential awarding of contracts by Pierce

**Horoscope:** "Money handled by others requires review, accounting."—Sydney Omarr, *Newsday*

**Subject:** JOHN GOTTI

**Sign:** Scorpio (b. 10/27/40)

**Date:** January 20, 1990

**Notable Activity:** Smiling and cocky, attended opening arguments of trial for assault and conspiracy—charges of which he would be acquitted

**Horoscope:** "Moon in your sign accents personality, color...Display versatility, humor, sensuality. Stress independence without appearing arrogant. Laugh!"—Sydney Omarr, *Newsday*

**Subject:** ROBERT CAMPEAU

**Sign:** Leo (b. 8/3/24)

**Date:** January 15, 1990

**Notable Activity:** Stood by as his overextended Campeau Corporation filed for bankruptcy protection

**Horoscope:** "It is time to tear down for ultimate purpose of rebuilding on more solid structure."  
—Sydney Omarr, *Newsday* —George Mannes

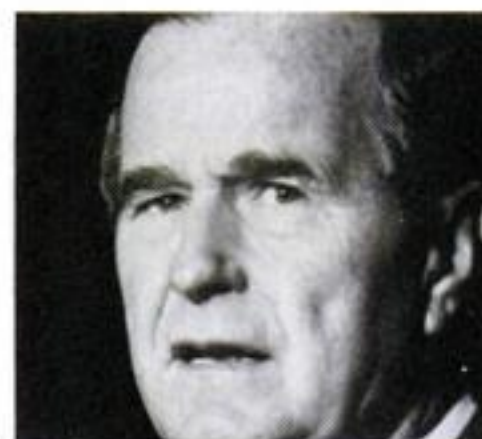
## SEPARATED AT BIRTH?



George Bush...



and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft?



George Bush...



and CIA Director William Webster?



George Bush...



and Secretary of the Treasury Nicholas Brady?

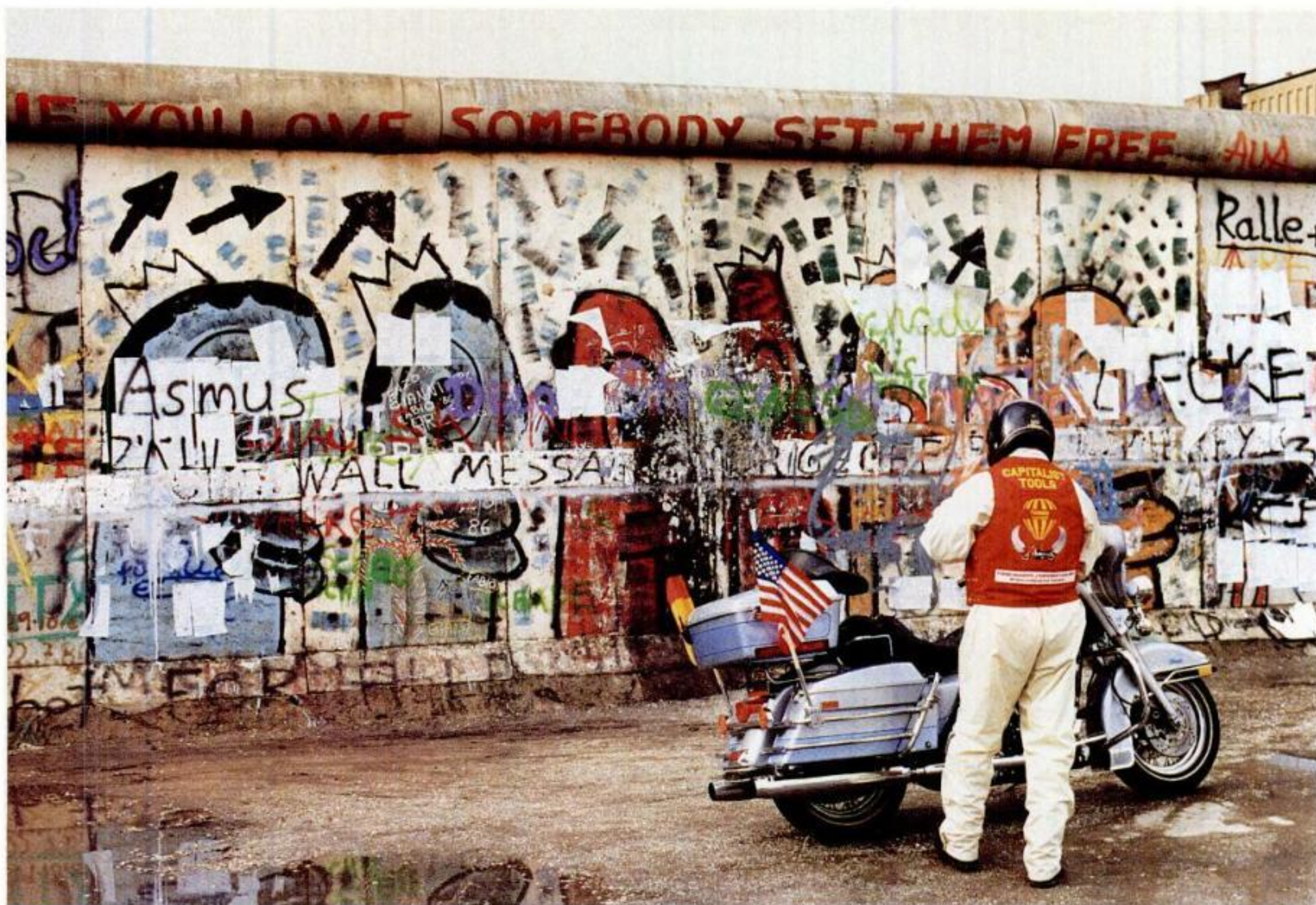


George Bush...



and former secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld?





Malcolm Forbes at the Berlin Wall. Photographed by Glen A. Davis.

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(R-Ore.) spent \$150 on campaign-related "plant maintenance."

**Fees and Tickets.** Representative Duncan Hunter (R-Cal.) spent \$70 of his campaign contributions on golf fees, \$50 on dues to join the House gym and \$200 to join Ducks Unlimited. Representative John Kasich (R-Ohio), apparently a more serious golfer, spent \$9,390.69 on "food/beverage/greens fees." Representative Carl Pursell (R-Mich.) spent \$582 on season tickets to University of Michigan football and basketball games. Representative Larry Smith (D-Fla.) spent \$200 of his campaign contributions on Super Bowl tickets. Representative Harris Fawell (R-Ill.) spent \$1,781.75 on Chicago White Sox season tickets. Representative John Myers (R-Ind.) spent \$3,842 to buy 16 season tickets to Indianapolis Colts games and \$769.50 for 8 season tickets to Purdue University football games. Representative Bob Michel (R-Ill.) spent \$275 on baseball tickets, and it was just to see some team in Peoria.

**Consulting With the Almighty.** Senator Alan Dixon (D-Ill.) spent \$31.70 on a "Mass for constituents." Representative Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.) bought \$96 worth of yarmulkes.

**Love.** Representative Gus Savage (D-Ill.), who recently molested a Peace Corps worker in Africa, spent \$389.60 for "lais [sic] for Love Boat cruise," \$500 for "Love Boat entertainment," \$79.30 for "fabric for Love Boat" and \$8,000 for "Food, Drink & Boarding for 250 Love Boat guests." With his campaign contributions Representative Buz Lukens (R-Ohio), who has been convicted of having sex with a child, bought \$404 worth of Magical Mike booklets and \$403.70 worth of "Candles for special occ[asion]."

## FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY, LIE LIKE A DOG

The Excuses of Marion Barry



Nobody likes a corrupt politician, but nobody likes denying a talented person his due. Before taking the fall earlier this year (see "Up Close and Personal With Lee Atwater, Homebody," page 88), Washington mayor Marion Barry showed Houdini-like genius in his ability to escape from accusations of personal misconduct and to cultivate among his constituents "a lot of sensitivity," as the American Enterprise Institute's Norman Ornstein puts it, for his burdens. At first it was frustrating to see a public servant brazenly disdaining not just conventional morality but the need to be circumspect. But after a while his true talent had to be acknowledged. His arrest notwithstanding, Marion Barry will be remembered as one of the most remarkable politicians of our era. In tribute, we offer this look back at his career.

| THE INCIDENT   | HIS EXCUSE  |
|--|---|
| August 1984: City employee Karen Johnson pleads guilty to drug charges but refuses to testify against Barry and is jailed for contempt of court. Later Johnson reportedly tells federal investigators she sold cocaine to Barry "20 or 30" times | Initially Barry says he only "vaguely" knows Johnson; later he admits to "personal relationship" with her; calls her accusations "part of character and political assassination to try to break my spirit and run me out of office"   |
| December 1985: Barry's close adviser and former deputy mayor Ivanhoe Donaldson is convicted of defrauding city government of \$190,000   | "There were some procedures violated, and that is not unusual in bureaucracies"   |
| May 1986: Mayor's official Lincoln Town Car fails to stop at red light and strikes car at 3:30 a.m.; chauffeur is given traffic citation   | On the "mystery" behind his late-night prowling: "There's no mystery—I'm a night owl"   |
| January 1987: Barry lingers at Beverly Hills Hilton for several days after Super Bowl XXI while severe snowstorm paralyzes Washington  | On why the city was slow to react to the blizzard: "We're not a snow town...where snow is confronted all the time, where you spend a lot of money on it"  |
| March 1987: Barry pays uninvited daytime visit to Capitol Hill apartment of 23-year-old part-time <i>Jet</i> model Grace Shell, who has to order him to leave  | Claims Shell had invited him to her apartment so he could meet her three-year-old son, Marcus   |
| November 1987: Barry is questioned about having smoked marijuana   | Issues curiously loopholed denial: says he has "never knowingly" smoked marijuana   |
| December 1988: Barry travels to the Ramada Inn room of a friend, Charles Lewis, at 1:10 a.m. Hotel is located in one of city's main drug-and-prostitution corridors  | Says Lewis "was very disturbed and said he really needed to chat with somebody, particularly about a job"   |
| January 1989: Barry is castigated by media for poor judgment in Charles Lewis incident   | "There's no textbook on how you be a mayor. There's no textbook on judgment. I might make one or two other [mistakes], but it will certainly be with great forethought"   |
| April 1989: Lewis is indicted on drug-possession charges   | Admits to "friendship" with Lewis, but "by friendship, I don't mean close friendship. I just have a tendency to get too close to people"  |
| October 1989: Critics imply that the city's homicide problem is a reflection of Barry's poor leadership  | "I am not the leader of Washington. I am not the business leader of Washington. I am not the spiritual leader of Washington. I am not the civic leader of Washington. I am not the social leader of Washington. I am the political leader of Washington. That's where my responsibility ends" |
| November 1989: Lewis testifies in Federal District Court that he gave Barry crack on "more than one occasion"  | On the lengths to which accused drug dealers, including his close-but-not-too-close friend Charles Lewis, might go to get a reduced sentence: "You'd lie on your mama, you'd lie on the pope, you'd do anything to save your hide"  |
| December 1989: <i>Regardie's</i> suggests that Barry presides over a corrupt administration  | Issues curiously self-incriminating denial: "If all of this corruption was going on, I should be in jail"   |

—Tom McNichol



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# THE SPY TRIP TIP: CROOKS ON TAPE

*Nixon's Back at the National Archives—and So Are His Expletives*



THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

[See "When the Hunter Gets Captured by the Game," page 85.]

**Exotica.** Senator Jesse Helms paid the Washington Intelligence Bureau of Fairfax, Virginia, \$1,000.25 for "caging."

## NUT UPDATE

Sad news: Washington's most celebrated certified lunatic, John Hinckley Jr., isn't getting better and won't be joining the rest of us in the general population anytime soon. President Reagan's would-be assassin—who, according to official documents, has been diagnosed as suffering from, among other ails, "Narcissistic Personality Disorder, [which] evidences itself in his pathological need for publicity, his grandiosity, his impaired judgment and insight, and his continued obsession with Jodie Foster"—recently applied to federal court for permission to grant interviews with the media.

Hinckley's doctors didn't think that was a good idea. Replying on behalf of Saint Elizabeths Hospital, assistant corporation counsel Janet L. Maher described his condition: "Mr. Hinckley's grandiosity is evidenced by comparisons between himself and John Lennon, Andrei Sakharov and Ezra Pound and his comparison of his love for Jodie Foster as like that of God sacrificing his son.... Mr. Hinckley also evidences a continued preoccupation with 'perfect love.' Despite his statements that he has not been preoccupied with Ms. Foster in five or six years, his behavior indicates otherwise; [he] continues to request pictures or drawings of Ms. Foster, including recently requesting nude drawings of her.... He also maintained 57 pictures of her in his room on the ward, many of them nude, well after he claimed to ▶

Washington is a city of such immediate concerns—*Will the Brady Plan survive? Will the capital-gains cut pass? Will Quayle's approval rating go up with a little gray at the temples?*—that sometimes one has to back off a little to gain some perspective. In simpler times museums offered such contemplative retreat, but now that the Corcoran is likely to be featuring the devotional watercolors of Jesse Helms, looking at art in the capital may not be the wisest investment of your leisure time. Wallowing in history, on the other hand, can be a calming respite, offering, as it were, a crook's tour of once-inflamed passions.

And what better place for this than the National Archives? How about an exhibit listed in the catalog as "Smoking Gun"? Imagine: for ten unforgettable minutes, you are inside the big desk in the Oval Office, listening as Richard Nixon and H. R. Haldeman speak the words that sealed the coffin on a certain presidency. But don't worry, claustrophobes: you're really sitting in the comfortable and almost always deserted listening room of the Archives' Nixon Presidential Materials Staff building, conveniently located in an Alexandria, Virginia, industrial park.

You don't have to be a Watergate aficionado to delight in these tapes.

Whether you're listening to "Milk Fund," "Dean Resignation," the beloved "Cancer on the Presidency" or another hit title from the catalog, helpful explanatory handouts will bring you up to speed on the rhetorical style of our 37th president ("Added to the [sound] quality problem is the fact that the majority of conversations...are unstructured, free-flowing, and spontaneous. In other words, they are normal exchanges"). And all the expletives that were deleted in the original news accounts are back, so that, for example, you can determine for yourself just how much Nixon liked Jews.

There is a refreshing balance at the Nixplex, as I like to call it, between the forbidding and

the homey. An apparently armed guard sits at the entrance; visitors must sign in and stow all their belongings in lockers in Room 109. On the other hand, posted above the tape console are the words BE KIND; REWIND. And the office you pass through en route to the listening room has on my two visits boasted a few festive notations on the wall calendar: PAT'S BIRTHDAY, PARTY and LEONARD NIMOY'S BIRTHDAY.

One of the few possessions visitors are allowed to bring into the Nixplex is a pen. You can take notes on blue paper supplied by the U.S. government.

In another room, file cabinets containing every official photograph ever taken of President Nixon are neatly cataloged by subject. The

category "The President and Poets," for example, is a collection of one photo (Nixon with Yevgeny Yevtushenko). Roaming through "Entertainers," on the other hand, could make you miss opening curtain at the Kennedy Center.

Since your tax dollars paid for these photos, the Archives will sell you copies of any or all for a nominal duplicating fee. The shot of Nixon shaking hands with Elvis can hang in an honored place in your home. It does in mine.

—Harry Shearer

To visit the Nixon Presidential Materials archive, take one of the five shuttle buses that leave each weekday from the National Archives in Washington.





SOME PEOPLE FEAR THE NIGHT  
BECAUSE IT LIBERATES  
THE OTHER SENSES.











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WHAT THE DAY HIDES.  
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BACARDI BLACK  
THE TASTE OF THE NIGHT.



## A LITTLE BIT OF D.C. RIGHT HERE IN MANHATTAN

*New York Tidiness and Washington Grace: A Visit to New York's IRS Headquarters*



naked city

**T**he lobby is dirty, and there are many, many signs in the reception area at the New York offices of the Internal Revenue Service. The government is clearly interested in printing signs. One reads,

NO FIREARMS ALLOWED IN BUILDING

Another:

ALL EMPLOYEES MUST SHOW AN IRS ID CARD  
TO THE GUARD BEFORE PROCEEDING

Another:

ALL FLOOR WARDENS PLEASE SIGN IN AT THE  
GUARD'S DESK, THANK YOU

And another:

DESIGNATED SMOKING AREA

Then: EMPLOYEES MUST SHOW PHOTO ID

WE KNOW YOU WORK HERE,

PLEASE COOPERATE. HAVE ID

A poster displays birds and a cryptic, World War II-style message:

SOME BIRDS TALK TOO MUCH, SILENCE MEANS  
SECURITY

This, according to the fine print, was the work of  
THE SECURITY AWARENESS AND EDUCATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE

On another wall:

LOITERING & SOLICITING IN THIS BUILDING  
PROHIBITED

And also:

PREMISES ARE PERIODICALLY TREATED WITH  
PESTICIDES FOR PEST PREVENTION AND CONTROL.

YOU MAY REQUEST INFORMATION  
ON TODAY'S APPLICATION AND  
A COPY OF THE NOTIFICATION

COVERSHEET AND PESTICIDE LABELS FROM  
NAME: FED-CAP

Also, an Uncle Sam poster says,

I WANT YOU TO PROTECT THE INFORMATION  
IN YOUR COMPUTER

In a special glass case there is a certificate that the  
Internal Revenue Service was awarded:

IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR EFFORTS ON BEHALF  
OF INDIVIDUALS WITH IMPAIRED HEARING

Was that because Ronald Reagan wore a hearing  
aid and the Internal Revenue Service helped him?  
Or does it have something to do with George  
Bush's incessant reminder, "Read my lips?"

—Alfa-Betty Olsen and Marshall Efron

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

have lost interest in her...

"Mr. Hinckley exhibits a preoccupation with power, describing himself as Hitler's successor, and writes of Charles Manson with admiration. Hinckley notes that 'Manson's Helter Skelter was nothing but a continuation of Hitler's dream.' He described Charles Manson in 1986 as a 'prophet' and again in 1988 as a 'prophet' and a 'cool dude'... Mr. Hinckley also writes about his power and influence over a cult of females who 'worship' him..."

"Mr. Hinckley's course in the hospital has been erratic. He has been tried in less restrictive settings, but each time has failed in his ability to handle the additional responsibilities created by the less structured settings. Mr. Hinckley, for example, was given grounds privileges, for the purpose, as he recognized, of going to and from work. Mr. Hinckley admits to violating these privileges on three occasions, by getting into another patient's car, and being driven to a location other than where he worked."

"Similarly... Mr. Hinckley's mail was reviewed... after staff had learned he had been corresponding with serial murderer Ted Bundy..."

Does violation of grounds privileges mean that Hinckley was trying to escape? Well, no. Or maybe. But probably no. "We considered it as a possibility at first," says Dr. David Powell, director of the Forensic Inpatient Services Division of Saint Elizabeths Hospital. "We decided he wasn't trying to make an escape attempt." Hinckley never left the actual campus; he just went somewhere he wasn't supposed to be. The privileges were rescinded.

Hinckley's request to grant interviews was denied.



### LIZ SMITH'S BLURB-O-MAT

*Capsule Reviews by*

*Liz Smith, the Publicist's Other Friend*

*Editor's note: Walter Monheit™, our regular publicist's friend, is on a well-deserved holiday this month, he says, in Biarritz. Taking his place is Liz Smith, essayist nonpareil for the New York Daily News and, in syndication, for papers nationwide. Thanks, Liz! (All blurbs guaranteed 100 percent authentic.)*

*Liz on CITY OF ANGELS:*

"A huge 'Hosanna!' to 'City of Angels.'... If this show isn't a hit—then, sweetheart (as Bogart would say...), there ain't no justice!"

*Liz on the aborted ANNIE 2, just before its Washington tryout phase:*

"The show's advance sale bounced up by about \$2 million bucks. Warbucks, of course!"

*Liz on Paula Abdul, choreographer for this year's Academy Awards ceremony:*

"She'll keep Oscar on his toes."

*Liz on Jack Kroll's return to Newsweek's theater pages:*

"Everyone is happy Newsweek decided to come to its senses, let Jack out of Coventry and let the good times 'Kroll'!"

*Liz on retro entertainment:*

"Get thee, not to a nunnery, but to the Rainbow & Stars aerie... and see in person the one and only Rosemary Clooney." ☺

### THE NEW YORK TIMES CHRONICLE TOTE BOARD A Monthly Tally



mentioned once every...

Stu Jackson ..... 10.5

John Lindsay ..... 10.5

James D.

Wolfensohn .... 10.5

Perry Como ..... 21

Jacques Cousteau ... 21

Fred Friendly ..... 21

Dizzy Gillespie ..... 21

Katharine Graham . . 21

Waylon Jennings ... 21

George F. Kennan ... 21

Arthur Miller ..... 21

Bill Moyers ..... 21

Jonathan Pollard . . . 21

...days



# “I’M SORRY, SENATOR, BUT IF YOU DON’T BRING SCRUPLES BACK BY MONDAY...”

*A List of Congressional Bedside Reading*

KNOWLEDGE WILL FOREVER GOVERN IGNORANCE: AND A PEOPLE WHO  
MEAN TO BE THEIR OWN GOVERNOURS, MUST ARM THEMSELVES WITH  
THE POWER WHICH KNOWLEDGE GIVES.

The words are James Madison’s, and they are inscribed in marble on the Madison Building at the Library of Congress, where congressmen enjoy special book-borrowing privileges. Inspired by Madison’s dictate, the leaders of the nation come here to arm themselves for valiant battle with ignorance and folly. When they dip into the world’s largest library collection — there are 20 million volumes at hand — which books do today’s congressmen turn to most frequently? We asked the librarians.

*Daddy*, by Danielle Steel

*Day of Reckoning: The Consequences of American Economic Policy*,

by Benjamin M. Friedman

*And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*, by Ralph D. Abernathy

*The Inside Job—The Looting of the Savings & Loans*, by Stephen Pizzo

Any Judith Krantz novel

*The Tempting of America*, by Robert Bork

*The Temple of My Familiar*, by Alice Walker

*Controlling Cholesterol*, by Kenneth H. Coopers

*The Job of a Congressman*, by Donald G. Tacheron

*The Kings of Cocaine*, by Guy Gugliotta and Jeff Leen

*The Enigma of Japanese Power*, by Karel Van Wolferen

*The Power Game*, by Hedrick Smith (congressmen like to look

for their names in the index)

*From Beirut to Jerusalem*, by Thomas Friedman

*Daughter of Destiny: An Autobiography*, by Pakistan’s Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto

*The Federalist Papers*

*The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, by Paul Kennedy

*My Turn*, by Nancy Reagan

And the most popular book of all — or, at least, the one most often on the waiting list — is Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged*. — Susan Lehman



# VISIT WASHINGTON — SEE THE MAJESTIC LOBSTERMAN

*A Tour of the Lesser-Known Landmarks*

**W**hen we’re in the federal district, there’s nothing we like better than visiting the monuments. The Lincoln Memorial—so moving! The Jefferson Memorial—so serene! The Washington Monument—it’s the obeliskiest! Still, even the greatest monuments can get over-familiar after a while, even boring. When that happens, we heed the words of Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute, who says, “Washington’s got more to offer as a city,” and head straight for some of the capital’s unsung landmarks. Here are our favorites.

**The American Farm Boy and The American Farm Girl; Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland.** The Ralston Purina Company of St. Louis commissioned these life-size statues, which were modeled after St. Louis high school students who had presumably demonstrated some expertise in the field of animal chow.

**First Air Mail Flight Plaque; West Potomac Park, south of Ohio Drive.** Through snow and sleet and freezing rain this landmark never fails to deliver lots of enjoyment to fans of the U.S. Postal Service.

**Nuns of the Battlefield; Rhode Island Avenue and M Street N.W.** This monument was erected in 1924 by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians to commemorate our nation’s many fighting nuns. Of course, they were really nurses, which makes you wonder why this statue isn’t called *Nuns of the Field Hospital*. The artist, Jerome Connor, ended up suing the Ancient Order for \$45,000, for nonpayment.

**Maine Lobsterman Memorial; Southwest Waterfront Park, at Maine Avenue S.W.** The Campfire Girls of Cundy’s Harbor, Maine, celebrated the International Year of the Child (1983) by inexplicably erecting this statue of a man fondling a crustacean.

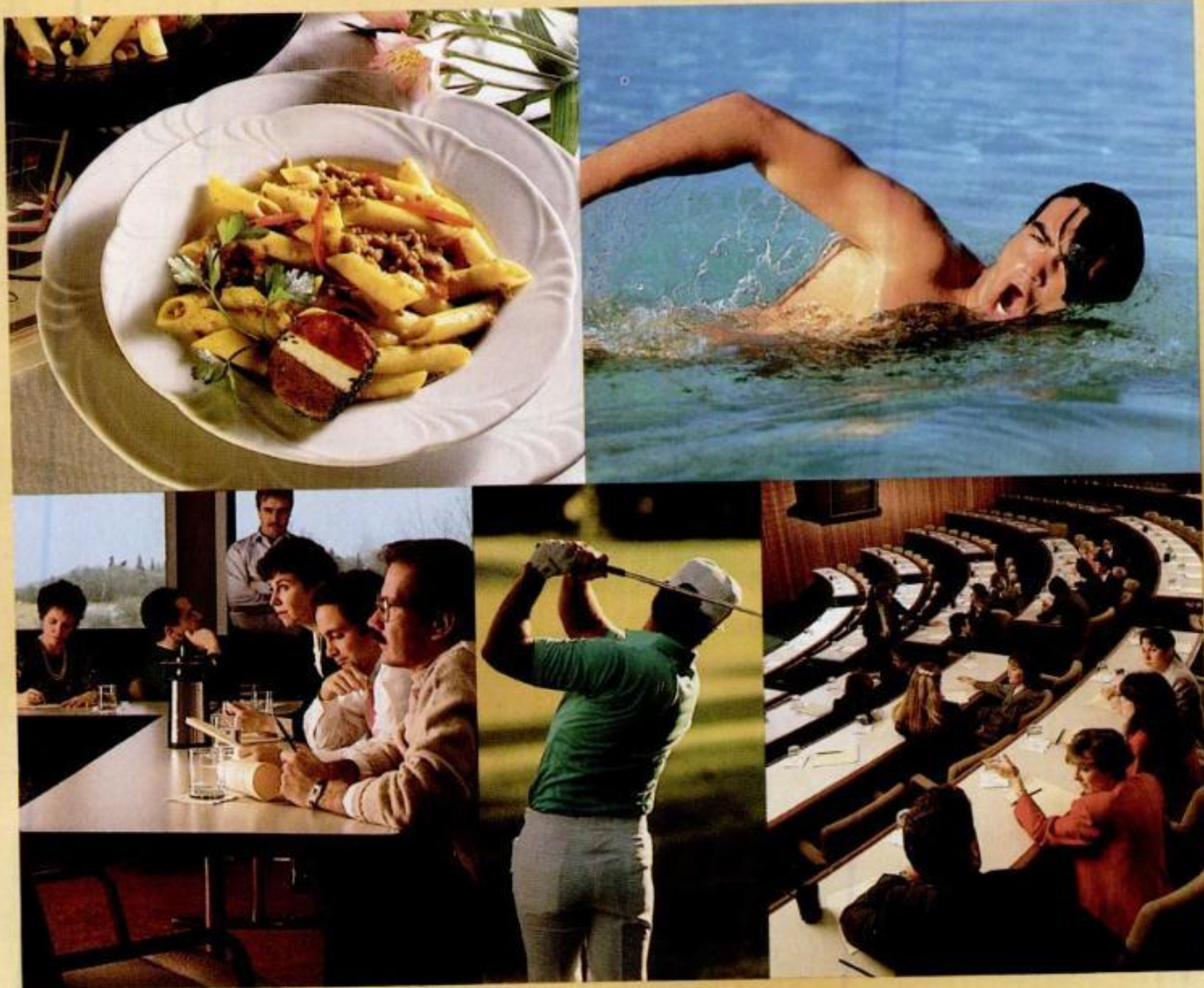
**Temperance Fountain; Pennsylvania Avenue and 7th Street N.W.** This miniature temple, which houses a drinking fountain, was donated by Henry Cogswell, a San Francisco dentist, so that people could quench their thirst with water rather than intoxicants. The fountain sits directly in front of a liquor store.

—Elissa Schappell





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# “Now, Mr. Kinsley, Would You Share Your Hair-Grooming Secrets With Us?”

SPY Starts Fan Clubs for Washington's Brightest Stars

**W**ashington is full of powerful people, but there are only a handful of genuine stars. And of course by *genuine stars* we don't mean former Redskins running back John Riggins or Speaker of the House Thomas Foley or Millie, the president's dog. We mean television pundits, those journalists and nominal journalists who gather in groups to chew over world and Washington events, usually on weekend shows sponsored by arms manufacturers, and who in the process become more famous, more wealthy and more influential than most of the policymakers they discuss. Of course, being a Washington star is not quite the plum that being a star in, say, Hollywood is. For example, there are not yet any glitzy, nationally televised awards ceremonies for Washington wits, and, more's the pity, no worshipful fan clubs exist for these tough, no-nonsense journalists.

Until now. In the interest of giving Washington's stars the adulation they deserve, SPY has taken it upon itself to inaugurate pretend fan clubs for some of these underlauded oracles. We began by calling up the stars and interviewing them for their (fictional) club newsletters. Some, like Patrick Buchanan, couldn't be bothered to speak to a loyal fan. Others, like Christopher Matthews, thought this was something to be discouraged. Most, however, were happy to comply.

## ELEANOR CLIFT

**Role as TV pundit:** Female member of *The McLaughlin Group* panel

**Role as journalist:** *Newsweek* correspondent

**Big break:** "Covering Jimmy Carter's campaign [in 1976] when everyone else thought he was going to lose"

**Best part of job:** "Having a front-row seat at history"

**Favorite political theorist or writer:** "Michael Kinsley"

**Words of advice for America's youth:** "I guess... 'Stay tuned'"

**Philosophy of life:** "I just try to live day by day"



**Ideal evening:** "Staying home, renting a movie and making some popcorn"

**Favorite food:** "Oat-bran bagels"

**Favorite drink:** "Diet Coke"

**Favorite music:** "I'm a child of rock 'n' roll. So put on 'Earth Angel' or 'You Send Me,' and I melt"

**Who would play her on film?** "Meryl Streep. Or—who's the woman on *L.A. Law*? Susan Dey. I guess we could give her a shot"

**Reaction to being called the thinking person's sex symbol by fan club members:** "You know, there's enough female in me that I'm flattered"

**Does she sleep in the nude?** "Oh, come on—I can't answer that"

## PAUL DUKE

**Role as TV pundit:** Moderator of PBS's narcotizingly low-key *Washington Week in Review*

**Role as journalist:** PBS correspondent

**Big break:** "Getting my first job with the Associated Press"

**Best part of job:** "I feel like I'm covering history"

**Favorite political theorist or writer:** "James MacGregor Burns and Henry Steele Commager are right up there"

**Words of advice for America's youth:** "Do what you really want to do"

**Philosophy of life:** "Well, I think the saddest people are those who look back and say, 'Gee, I wish I had tried that'"

**Ideal evening:** "Sitting around with old and dear friends and just talking about anything that strikes our fancy"

**Favorite food:** "Rockfish"

**Favorite drink:** "Mint julep"

**Favorite music:** "Mozart is my favorite artist, and the *Jupiter* Symphony is my favorite piece"

**Who would play him on film?** "Paul Newman"

**Reaction to being called the thinking person's sex symbol by fan club members:** [Laughs heartily] "I would say that the women who have that view show a certain discernment and good taste"

**Does he sleep in the nude?** "No—pajamas"



## FRED BARNES

**Role as TV pundit:** Talks-out-of-the-side-of-his-mouth conservative on *The McLaughlin Group*

**Role as journalist:** Senior editor, *The New Republic*

**Reaction to fan club formation:** "Well, I'm sure McLaughlin will be flattered. He takes all flattery seriously"

**Best part of job:** "The reporting. Finding out what's going on"

**Favorite political theorist or writer:** "I don't read a whole lot of political theory, to be honest.... Let me think.... I do have a favorite economics theorist, George Gilder. He's sort of an economics popularizer and a great writer. Ahhh... favorite political theorist... this is a hard question. I guess James Madison, for *The Federalist Papers*"

**Words of advice for America's youth:** "About journalism, about life? What? Journalism? Stay out of Washington until you're 30.... Learn a little about America before you come to Washington"

**Philosophy of life:** "None, really, but I am a Christian. That's... a philosophy of life, I guess, but it's a religious thing"

**Ideal evening:** "Stay home and watch a basketball game... or two. There's nothing better than an NBA doubleheader. [Repulsive TV pundit Robert] Novak and I have season tickets together for the Bullets. We go to every game"

**Favorite food:** "Plain yogurt"

**Favorite drink:** "Uh, diet Coke... diet cherry Coke. It's hard to find"

**Favorite music:** "Well, I used to like Bob Dylan, but now I guess my favorite singer is Bob Seger. Do you know who he is?"

**Who would play him on film?** "I never thought about it, to be honest. I don't know. Gee, I don't know, that'd be hard to answer"

**Reaction to being called the thinking person's sex symbol by fan club members:** "Well, I'm flattered, but tell them I'm married, with four kids. That'll quiet that ground swell"

**Does he sleep in the nude?** "Oh, I won't"





answer that sort of question"

## JACK GERMOND

### Role as TV pundit:

Gruff, world-weary liberal teddy bear on *The McLaughlin Group*

### Role as journalist:

Columnist for the *Baltimore Evening Sun*

**Best part of job:** "[Having] control of your own schedule, so you work when you feel like working and not work when you don't"

**Favorite political theorist or writer:** "There's nobody, really, in that category"

**Words of advice for America's youth:** "You mean reporters? About 90 percent of reporting is being willing to work hard. Shoe leather. The other 10 percent is luck"

**Philosophy of life:** [Laughs] "I don't really have one... I'm pretty laid-back. I guess I could say that things are never as important as they seem at the time"

**Ideal evening:** "I like to go to the racetrack"

**Favorite food:** "You can tell by looking at me that I like it all"

**Favorite drink:** "My favorite is cognac"

**Who would play him on film?** "Geez, I never thought of it... I can't imagine, to tell you the truth"

**Reaction to being called the thinking person's sex symbol by fan club members:** [Laughs] "I'm flattered"

**Is it a turnoff to be asked on a date?** "Well, I'm happily married"

**Does he sleep in the nude?** "I can't answer that"

## MORTON KONDRACK

### Role as TV pundit:

Hosts *American Interests*—the one show even more tedious than *Washington Week in Review*—and plays the idealistic teenage son on *The McLaughlin Group*

**Role as journalist:** Senior editor, *The New Republic*

**Best part of job:** "I get to watch history being made firsthand"



**Words of advice for America's youth:** "Study hard"

**Philosophy of life:** "The 12 steps of AA. The injunction to love your neighbor as you love God"

**Ideal evening:** "Stay home and talk with my wife"

**Favorite food:** "Pasta. And popcorn"

**Favorite drink:** "Diet cranberry juice"

**Favorite music:** "Handel's *Messiah*"

**Who would play him on film?** "Richard Dreyfuss comes to mind"

**Reaction to being called the thinking person's sex symbol by fan club members:** "Thank you. I take that as a compliment"

**Is it a turnoff to be asked on a date?** "I'm married"

**Does he sleep in the nude?** "What?"

## MICHAEL KINSLEY

**Role as TV pundit:** Excitable, moderately liberal antagonist to Patrick Buchanan on CNN's *Crossfire*

### Role as journalist:

Writes the TRB column in *The New Republic* and essays in *Time*

**Reaction to fan club formation:** "Are you nuts? Is this a joke?... If it's true, I appreciate it, but I find it hard to believe"

**Best part of job:** "Writing a good column, which happens sometimes, is more satisfying than the TV show"

**Philosophy of life:** "I'm still looking"

**Ideal evening:** "I don't know"

**Favorite food:** "Oh, come on, I'm not going to talk about my favorite food"

**Favorite drink:** "I won't talk about that"

**Favorite music:** "I'm not going to talk about that stuff, I'm sorry"

**Who would play him on film?** "Um, I have no idea. It seems implausible; it wouldn't make much of a movie"

**Reaction to being called the thinking person's sex symbol by fan club members:** "I don't mind that, oddly enough"

**Is it a turnoff to be asked on a date?** "I'm not getting into that"

**Does he sleep in the nude?** "Okay, what is this?"

—Michael Hainey

\*"I can't imagine [a Hollywood actress] would find it exciting to be on the arm of Michael Kinsley," says analyst Norman Ornstein.



## YOUNG VICE PRESIDENTS NEVER DIE

*They Just Make You Laugh*

In a revealing profile in *The New York Times* last year we learned that Vice President Quayle was enraptured by *American Caesar*, William Manchester's biography of General Douglas MacArthur. *Why*, we wondered, *would the life story of the man who single-handedly wrought the Allies' Southwest Pacific victory so interest the chuckleheaded scion of a Corn Belt news-chain fortune?* Surely, as Quayle's dreamboat eyes drifted across Manchester's prose, he deciphered the screaming semaphore of destiny.

### MACARTHUR

### QUAYLE

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Delivered West Point commencement address in 1933                                     | Delivered West Point commencement address in 1989   |
| "Handsome as a prince he was"—a West Point classmate                                  | "He was incredibly good-looking"—a Huntington High classmate  |
| Was said to be "affianced to eight girls at the same time" at West Point              | "Chased broads like his old man" at DePauw, says his father   |
| Name of family doctor and spinal-defect corrector: Franz Pfister                      | Name of family friend and congressional-campaign worker: Ann Pfister                                      |
| Thought of himself as defender, with the pope, of Christian values in the world       | Thought of himself as defender, with law student Frank Pope, of conservative values at Indiana University |
| Used influence of the National Guard to gain entrance into the Philippines            | Used influence of Major General Phillippi to gain entrance into the National Guard                        |
| "[He was a] soaring intellect. [He] often quoted Plato's <i>Republic</i> "—Manchester | "[He is a] smart man. [He] tries to read Plato's <i>Republic</i> every year"—Marilyn Quayle               |
| Said, "In war there is no substitute for victory," in 1951                            | Said, "There is nothing that a good defense cannot beat a better offense," in 1988                        |

—Martin Kibn





## NO BRENT SCOWCROFT, BUT LOTS OF GAS

*Driving Through the Heart of the Great Inside-the-Beltway/Outside-the-Beltway Dichotomy*

**L**iterally speaking, the Capital Beltway consists of those sections of U.S. Interstates 495 and 95 that encircle Washington, D.C. In the popular political lexicon, of course, a person attuned to the nuances of Washington politics and policy is said to possess an **inside-the-Beltway** mentality, in contrast to the majority of Americans, whose ordinary concerns are more, well, **outside the Beltway**. A Justice Department spokesman, for example, dismisses criticism of Attorney General Dick Thornburgh as "a lot of **inside-the-Beltway** chatter." Television newsman Jim Lehrer asks White House Chief of Staff John Sununu about his lack of "**inside-the-Beltway** experience." Pundit Fred Barnes says Republicans hope that Daniel Moynihan's Social Security tax cut proposal dies "**inside the Beltway** because if it gets **outside the Beltway**...the pressure will be so great that [it] will pass." The American Enterprise Institute's Norman Orn-

stein says he's "getting a little sick of the phrase **inside the Beltway**." And so on. Is the way of thinking really so dramatically different on either side of the Beltway? We circumnavigated the thing itself to find out.

**TEST NO. 1** We began our journey along the 66-mile highway near Exit 33, north of Bethesda. Virtually at random, we pulled off at Exit 31 (Georgia Avenue) and drove up to the Best Care Pharmacy, located a mere 500 yards **outside the Beltway**. There were no customers in the pharmacy—perhaps an indication that catastrophic health insurance is mainly an **inside-the-Beltway** preoccupation. We asked for a copy of *The New Republic*, the liberalish journal of **inside-the-Beltway** opinion. The pharmacist replied that he did not sell *The New Republic* and that "no one around here" did. By *around here*, we assume, he meant **outside the Beltway**.

We traveled next to a nearby Peoples

drugstore 500 yards **inside the Beltway**, where we requested *The New Republic*. "I don't think we have it, but you can go back and look for yourself," one of the cashiers told us. We found an impressive array of well-known magazines, but there were no *New Republics* on the shelves.

Based on the results of our first test, it appears that people **inside the Beltway** are generally better read, though not necessarily more politically aware, than their counterparts **outside the Beltway**. Or that no one reads *The New Republic*. Or that no one who reads *The New Republic* requires tetracycline, pipe tobacco or panty hose.

**TEST NO. 2** We pulled off at Exit 9, near Andrews Air Force Base, and into a Holiday Inn located just **outside the Beltway** in Camp Springs, Maryland. At the reception desk we asked the clerk, "Is there a Brent Scowcroft staying here?" The reference to the national security adviser could not have been more obvious, partic-



# Midnight. For the purist.





## naked city

ularly since a story about Scowcroft's latest arms-control proposal had appeared in that day's *Washington Post*, a copy of which was in clear view of the receptionist. Our question should have yielded a hoot of amusement. Instead, the receptionist showed not even a glimmer of recognition. While she pored over her register—pausing once to ask, "What's the first name, again?"—we perused a flier advertising the hotel's "Andrews Air Force Base Specials," including one with a "complimentary All-American breakfast." Finally she announced that no such person was staying at the Camp Springs Holiday Inn.

Repeating the test at a Holiday Inn off Exit 1 in Alexandria, Virginia, **inside the Beltway**, we asked another receptionist to check for Brent Scowcroft. This receptionist showed no sign of recognizing the name, either. Scowcroft's first name presented no particular difficulty for her,

but she too announced that there was "no one by that name staying here." This Holiday Inn featured no discounts for Air Force personnel, nor did it offer an "All-American breakfast."

The results of this test suggest that Scowcroft isn't very well known **inside or outside the Beltway**, and that businesses **outside the Beltway** are generally more patriotic than those **inside the Beltway**.

**TEST NO. 3** Whipping around the final leg of the Beltway, we pulled off at Exit 11, at Tysons Corner, Virginia, just **outside the you-know-what**. At the Tysons International Exxon, we asked one of the service-station attendants to tell us the best route to take to get **outside the Beltway**. Of course, we were already **outside the Beltway**—our purpose was to see how aware the natives are of this fact. "**Outside the Beltway?**" asked the surprised attendant. "You see that road over there?" he said, pointing. "That's the Beltway. You're

already **outside** it."

Nearing the end of our frantic circumnavigation, we swerved off at Exit 34 and fishtailed into the Bethesda Mobil, located **inside the Beltway**. Here we asked how to get **inside the Beltway**. "Just keep going straight up Wisconsin Avenue, and the exit's on your right," came the reply. This, of course, is the way to get *onto* the Beltway, not the way to get **inside** it.

The results of this third test suggest that people **inside the Beltway** don't listen very carefully and prefer to give a sophisticated answer not to the question asked of them but to one of their own devising. Our attendant **outside the Beltway**, while not evincing much familiarity with the nuances of government policy, certainly displayed the clear-eyed common sense of the common man and woman who are the backbone of our nation, whether power brokers in Washington know it or not.

—Tom McNichol



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# ASK NOT FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS; IT TOLLS FOR THEE, MARLIN FITZWATER

A SPY Telecommunications Investigation



**C**hief among the standards of power in Washington is the speed of response to one's telephone call. An immediate pickup or a quick return call shows the caller is important; a dilatory callback is a sure, if cruel, sign of the caller's lower prestige. So accurate a measurement of clout is the phone call that we used it to evaluate the relative might of some very influential people.

Recently a SPY reporter pretended to be the assistant to six prominent power brokers. Five were Washingtonians—Cabinet wife Georgette Mosbacher ("a modest presence in town," says Norman Ornstein, in understatement), *Washington Post* editor Ben Bradlee, Chief Justice William Rehnquist, convicted felon

Oliver North and Senator Daniel P. Moynihan—and one was from Hollywood: superagent Mike Ovitz. The phony assistant placed calls to presidential press secretary Marlin Fitzwater, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, Washington Redskins owner Jack Kent Cooke, *Washington Post* editor Ben Bradlee (yes, he's on both lists; no, we didn't have him call himself), power restaurateur Duke Zeibert and Harriet Kassman, owner of the eponymous swank boutique. We then measured the time that elapsed between the moment we, in our power disguise, introduced ourselves and the moment the recipient took or returned our call. Here are the results:

|                                      | To: Jack Kent Cooke  | To: Dick Cheney   | To: Ben Bradlee   | To: Duke Zeibert  | To: Harriet Kassman  | To: Marlin Fitzwater  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>From: Georgette Mosbacher</b>     | We were put through immediately  | Immediately. His secretary suggested interrupting a meeting for us  | It took 23 hours, 52 minutes, 35 seconds                        | Zeibert's brother returned the call 19 hours, 3 minutes, 20 seconds later | Immediately  | After 51 minutes, 45 seconds, a secretary. After 1 hour, 30 seconds, Fitzwater himself            |
| <b>From: Ben Bradlee</b>             | Immediately  | 5 hours, 15 minutes, 22 seconds   | —   | Told to call back after 6:00 p.m., we did; Zeibert picked up immediately  | Immediately  | As SPY went to press, 49 days   |
| <b>From: William Rehnquist</b>       | Secretary: "What company are you with, Mr. Lindquist?"; return came 11 minutes, 10 seconds later | A secretary to a secretary picked up, asked us to spell Rehnquist's name and then called back four times <sup>1</sup> | 14 minutes, 35 seconds  | Immediately   | 4 minutes, 15 seconds; a second call came 1 hour, 9 minutes, 5 seconds later   | Secretary: "I hate to ask—I feel so stupid.... Who is he?" Return came 96 hours, 42 minutes later |
| <b>From: Oliver North</b>            | Cooke took 3 minutes, 20 seconds to pick up  | One call at 39:35, another 10 minutes, 40 seconds later   | Immediately   | As SPY went to press, 43 days   | Immediately  | 15 hours, 7 minutes, 55 seconds   |
| <b>From: Daniel Patrick Moynihan</b> | 1 hour, 51 minutes, 35 seconds   | Immediately   | Immediately   | As SPY went to press, 40 days   | Someone said, "Whatever game you're playing, please just stop it. Please stop" | 19 minutes, 23 seconds  |
| <b>From: Mike Ovitz</b>              | As SPY went to press, 34 days  | As SPY went to press, 34 days   | Secretary: "He himself is calling?"; then Bradlee took the call | As SPY went to press, 34 days   | Employee: "Is Mr. Ovitz in retail?" As SPY went to press, 34 days              | Secretary: "Let me transfer you upstairs" <sup>2</sup>  |

1. 15 minutes, 30 seconds later; 21 minutes, 10 seconds after that; 45 minutes, 6 seconds after that; and 2 hours, 2 minutes, 21 seconds after that. Then, 5 hours, 27 minutes and 17 seconds after our original call, Cheney personally returned the chief justice's call. Another call came two hours later.

2. Man upstairs: "Michael who? Who's he with? Could you spell that, please?" We were then transferred to a third person: "Any way to find out why he's calling?... Well, who is he?... Well, we're not in the movie business, and Mr. Fitzwater will not return the call until we have a subject for the call."

Our investigation shows that if it is imperative that one get through to Washington V.I.P.'s, *one should pretend to be Georgette Mosbacher*. Hands down, she is the person with whom movers and shakers deem it most urgent to talk: the total time it took for her calls to be returned was 40 hours, 55 minutes and 15 seconds—some 2 full *days* less than for runner-up William Rehnquist's.

However, more unnerving than this finding is the realization that the secretary of Defense, right at the start of the post-Cold War period, had only 39 minutes and 35 seconds' worth of busi-

ness that he considered more important than returning Oliver North's call. Although overall Cheney was less prompt about returning calls than Bradlee, Kassman or Cooke, his numerous calls to North and Rehnquist, when seen in the light of his secretary's eagerness to take Mosbacher's call, point to an unsettling availability. Of course, even the ready-to-chat Cheney had no time for the most powerful person in show business, Mike Ovitz. Total time for the King of Hollywood's calls to be returned: 170 days and counting. **D**



# MAY

## DATEBOOK

Enchanting and  
Alarming Events

Upcoming in Our Nation's  
Capital and Environs

**1** The first day of Foot Health Month, as designated by Bethesda's vital American Podiatric Medical Association. G'won—treat yourself to a pair of insoles.

**3** James Brown gets a year older today—in jail. (Meanwhile, shockingly, Jerry Lee Lewis is a free man.)

**9** The American Association of Orthodontists, some 10,000 strong, spends its final day at the Washington

Convention Center—bewilderingly, *right in the middle of Foot Health Month*. Teary-eyed attendees, BRACES ARE BEAUTIFUL buttons pinned to lapels, exchange hugs and phone numbers before scattering across the country to resume their lucrative practice of gouging gum tissue from the mouths of nouveau riche progeny.

**12** The tenth annual PEN/Faulkner Awards ceremony, for the best new work of fiction by an American writer; the Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 East Capitol Street S.E. A series of readings by the winner and nominees follows. Thomas Pynchon's failure to materialize puts everyone in a sulk

until Gallagher impersonator Allan (Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All)

Gurganus wows 'em with his masterful delivery of Old South dialect.

**12** In a citywide benefit for Goodwill, various embassies in the District open their doors to the public. Your \$25 ticket entitles you to free shuttle service and an opportunity to meet

prominent government and media functionaries. The mind races with enticing possibilities: all

the melon balls you can eat with an Indonesian dignitary; a canapé-fueled chat with Al Hunt in the Bolivian embassy; pigs-in-blankets and hush puppies with Andrea Mitchell and Ambassador Ryohei Murata of Japan; or maybe a heart-to-heart with Larry Eagleburger on the roof of the Pakistani embassy.

**13** The whole world turns its attention to Ieper, Belgium, where the annual Cat Festival is under way. "Stuffed cats are thrown, some with prizes, from the belfry," promises the European Travel Commission. Not in the Washington area, admittedly, but worth a day trip; flights leave Dulles for Brussels

Wednesday through Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

**20** "A Taste of Arlington"; the Village at Shirlington, off Interstate 395. Some 40 restaurants participate in a municipal celebration of suburban cuisine. Sales of Kraft cheeses, Swanson frozen foods and Soave Bolla soar.

**24** Bob Dylan, the voice of a generation, and Frank Oz, the voice of Miss Piggy, turn 49 and 46, respectively. Birthday-specific, inside-the-Beltway celebration details not available at press time.

**25** Congress begins its eleven-day District Work Period, traditionally an opportunity for elected officials to return to their districts to attend bull roasts, eat chicken stew and ride in vans (see [The Fine Print](#), page 22). Constituents demand to know why Senator Moynihan's Social Security tax cut has no support in Congress.

**28** Memorial Day, and the start of the Kemper Open Pro-Am Golf Tournament. In a chilling, *Body Snatchers*-like scenario, the newly redesigned Tournament Players Club at Avenel in Potomac is blanketed by thousands of dads decked out in Bermudas and Golden Bear™ placket-collar

polo shirts.

**28** One hundred eighteenth commencement exercises of the Georgetown University Tort-o-Mat, which releases another 900 attorneys into the world.

**30** The Lincoln Memorial was dedicated on this day in 1922, cutting a swath of freedom for *all* men who have beards and no mustaches, be they surgeon generals or simple Amish folk. ☛

## ASK DR. NICK

Timely Advice from  
an Actual Psychiatrist



Dear Dr. Nick,

I am worried about a friend who has developed some pretty strong feelings for her married boss, "Jim," who hired her as his assistant about ten years ago. Jim seems to have strong feelings for her, too. When he was promoted in 1985, he insisted on taking her along, putting her in charge of public relations or something. Then, in 1988, Jim quit his job to help one of his old pals get a promotion, and my friend quit *her* job for the same reason. When Jim's friend won his dream job, he hired both of them, and now they spend more time together than ever. They have adjoining offices, presumably so they can talk about "foreign affairs" together, but let's face it, neither of them knows a *thing* about foreign affairs! My friend is in way over her head. Does she need to seek professional help?

Dr. Nick replies: *It sounds as if your friend is easily led into situations that are not necessarily in her own best interest. This may reflect some dependency needs such as those found in people with Dependent Personality Disorder. Both her choice of love object—a married man—and her taking on a job she is not qualified for indicate masochistic tendencies, compatible with a self-defeating personality disorder. Another area to explore is how upset she is by her situation. Signs and symptoms of major depression or dysthymia (chronic depression) should be investigated and treated if present.*

(Dr. Nick is the nom de plume of the SPY psychiatrist, who points out that he has never seen or spoken to the subject, and says that it's highly irresponsible of him to offer a diagnosis in a magazine. The subject, Dr. Nick notes, may be just fine.) ☛



# WHAT BANKERS ARE TO NEW YORK AND TALENT AGENTS ARE TO HOLLYWOOD...

A SPY Guide to Washington's Megapowerful Law Firms



**T**here are 53,000 lawyers in Washington, and the most Washingtonian part of the city is its big law firms, which form a permanent shadow government. Lawyers arrive by way of the famous public-sector-private-sector revolving door, instantly bettering their government salaries five- or tenfold as partners. The only real job requirements are the abilities to peddle influence with former colleagues still in government and to end-run the regulations you once enforced.

Partners talk a lot about the capital's "unique legal culture." Instead of decorating their offices with English hunting scenes, Washington lawyers brazenly advertise their clout by covering

their walls with photographs of themselves alongside politicians. Only in Washington could a washed-up Democratic hack like Carter White House adviser Stuart Eizenstat resurface and become a rainmaker—that is, client recruiter—at a law firm. Eizenstat has earned a good deal of his recent fortune the way other Washington lawyers are now making easy money: by overcharging deep-pocketed Japanese clients to open doors on Capitol Hill.

But no special interest is too narrow to need a Washington law firm: take the Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils, which keeps Covington & Burling on retainer to safeguard its no doubt important legislative interests.

| Firm Name                                      | ARNOLD & PORTER   | COVINGTON & BURLING  | STEPTOE & JOHNSON  | WILLIAMS & CONNOLLY  | WILMER, CUTLER & PICKERING  |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Best résumé in firm                            | William Rogers: Princeton, Yale Law School ( <i>Yale Law Journal</i> ), Supreme Court clerk, under secretary of State for economic affairs. International lawyer who has the same name as the former secretary of State but isn't him | Charles Ruff: Swarthmore, Columbia Law School, special Watergate prosecutor, U.S. attorney. Considered one of the smartest lawyers in town | John Nolan: U.S. Naval Academy, Georgetown Law School, Supreme Court clerk, administrative assistant to Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Litigator | Robert Barnett: Phi Beta Kappa, University of Chicago ( <i>University of Chicago Law Review</i> ), clerk to Justice Byron White, assistant to Walter Mondale. Agent for TV newspeople, husband of CBS News correspondent Rita Braver | Lloyd Cutler: first in class at Yale Law School, though three years younger than classmates (editor in chief, <i>Yale Law Journal</i> ). White House counsel, 1979–80 |
| Weirdest client(s)                             | Lobbyists for campaign finance reform   | Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils  | Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics   | <i>The National Enquirer</i>   | Dalai Lama  |
| Diciest client(s)                              | Association of Colombian Flower Growers   | The Tobacco Institute  | Occidental Petroleum   | Oliver North, Leona Helmsley, Mike Milken  | Manufacturers of deadly all-terrain vehicles  |
| Reputation                                     | Innovative and aggressive. Among first firms in Moscow  | Used to be number one, but has slipped behind Arnold & Porter  | Staging a comeback with work for foreign governments   | The house that Edward Bennett Williams built. Hoffa was an early client  | Can it survive eventual passing of Cutler, its 72-year-old founder?   |
| Japanese clients overpaying firm to open doors | Four  | One  | Two  | None   | Three   |
| Democratic hack power broker(s)                | Lobbyist Jack Quinn, Gary Hart's legal counsel  | Three partners are Carter administration alumni  | Former Arizona governor Bruce Babbitt, who lobbies for S&Ls  | Barnett again. Advised Geraldine Ferraro's campaign  | Cutler. As Carter's counsel, handled such key crises as Billygate   |
| Reagan administration revolving-door catch     | William Isaac, former chairman, FDIC. S&L collapse was windfall for Isaac and firm  | Charles Rule, head of Justice Department's very, very active antitrust division  | Michael Smith, deputy trade representative. Not a lawyer, but brings in big trade clients  | None   | William Wilkins, a Democrat. Staffer from Senate Finance Committee; knows tax loopholes   |
| Distinctive feature                            | Markets itself as equivalent of a supermarket, with affiliates in trade, banking and lobbying under one roof  | Bluest blood of any Washington law firm—Ivy League WASPs dominate  | Has women partners who bring in business   | Catholic street fighters such as Oliver North lawyer Brendan Sullivan; Ivy League Supreme Court clerks such as David Kendall   | Has on-site child-care center so nobody has a good excuse not to work weekends  |
| Most entertaining controversy                  | Didn't invite firm founder Abe Fortas back after he was forced to resign from the Supreme Court   | Dropped South African Airways as client after law students boycotted job interviews  | Firm is too boring for controversy   | Whether to give Williams's huge office to Sullivan after the founder died in 1988  | Whether to give free legal representation to the PLO (no) and Ted Bundy (yes)   |





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THE POST



Ben



Kay



Bob



ain me though it does to abandon our regular cast of characters—Max, Punch, Warren, Abe and Shirley will be back in this space next month—it is fitting in this special issue that we turn our eye southward to the 15th Street N.W. offices of *The Washington Post*. Any such undertaking must by its very nature begin with the man whose craggily raffish, pigeon-chested presence has so defined the offices of the paper for the past two decades. Indeed, in the way that airline pilots have for years mimicked Chuck Yeager's assured West Virginia drawl, so too have the young bulls at the *Post* attempted to make themselves over in Ben Bradlee's profane club-man image. Thus the archetypal male *Post* reporter or editor is lanky and tall, comes from the Midwest or Northeast, is generally smarter than he lets on and—because Ben does—swears like a longshoreman. The more aggressive careerists at the paper wear broadly striped Turnbull & Asser shirts. Just like Ben. And Ben, of course, is the most famous newspaper editor in America.

In the office-romance category, Bradlee, who like his former counterpart at *The New York Times* is married to a bosomey dirty-book writer, has the field to himself, and largely through his wife's design. It seems that since the Bradlee-Sally Quinn union (unofficially in 1972, officially in 1978), serious office romances have been discouraged as per Sally's wish, so much so that at least two reporters have had their careers at the paper truncated following revelations of their involvement with fellow *Post* staff members. The only exception to this rule seems to be assistant managing editor Bob Woodward, the most famous newspaper reporter in America. Woodward is married to Metro reporter Elsa "Jugs" Walsh, whom he met while she

was working as an au pair for ABC correspondent Jim Wooten and his wife.

Upward movement at the paper is made considerably easier if you have the blessing of Sally, who has not written for the *Post* since 1981. Invites to the couple's parties, such as the one they throw every New Year's Eve or the black-tie Valentine's Day affair they threw this year, are highly accurate barometers of acceptance and future career progression at the paper. When the sports daily *The National* tried to hire Tony Kornheiser away from the *Post*, Kornheiser said he would stay at the paper, but only if he was given a regular column in the Style section, a notion that Style editor Mary Hadar violently opposed. Kornheiser went directly to his friend Sally Quinn. His Style-section column will celebrate its first anniversary this fall.

Since naming managing editor Leonard Downie Jr. as his successor, Bradlee has assumed the role of editor emeritus. Downie is described variously as capable, arrogant, bland—and by one reporter as "the whitest man I have ever met," a stunning superlative in the realm of Woodward. Chief among his qualifications is his long friendship with *Post* publisher-heir Donald Graham, who can be described much as Downie is. Bradlee is 68 but in no apparent hurry to leave. Without any date set for his retirement, he has been telling intimates "another three years" for the past five.

Meg Greenfield is another *Post* editor who has the ear of a Graham—in this case, proprietor Katharine's. As editor of the paper's Op-Ed page, Greenfield wields enormous power; the page is far more coveted and influential in Washington than, say, the *Times*'s Op-Ed page is in

New York. But the page has sagged under the weight of predictable right-wing standard-bearers such as James Kilpatrick and Evans and Novak, and predictable left-wingers such as Carl Rowan and William Raspberry; Greenfield is now derided as much for her tiresome stewardship of the Op-Ed page as for her bulldog, brook-no-dissent manner.

Outside the capital the *Post* has nowhere near the influence the *Times* has, partly because it is a more provincial paper, partly because it just doesn't have the grim, grave look of the *Times* (it is difficult to take fully seriously a newspaper that has grocery ads sprinkled among its international and domestic news pages) and partly because it is more fun to read than the *Times*. *Post* prose does not go through the flattening process that so drains the life out of *Times* writing. The results are both delightful (David Remnick's peerless reporting from Moscow, for instance) and unfortunate (Kornheiser's column, which is an embarrassment to almost everyone at the paper).

A while back Bradlee strolled through the newsroom with a new chain saw that he'd bought to clear away the trees at Grey Gardens, his East Hampton estate, mock-threatening reporters to get their stories in on time. Not the wittiest of gestures, but a level of authentic playfulness that would never, ever happen at the *Times*. As opposed to the Borgialike nest that the New York paper has long been, the *Post* is more of a collegially competitive parochial backwater. But while the *Times* under Rosenthal and now under executive editor Max Frankel is a great paper that is often only good, the *Post* under Bradlee is a good paper that is occasionally great.

—J. J. Hunsecker





## HIDDEN

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**Imagine a town  
dredged from fetid  
southern swamps.  
Imagine a town  
of dour avenues and  
walled-off blocks,  
of vast slums broken  
up by anonymous  
government buildings.  
Imagine a town—  
a sober, *serious* town—  
run by policy nerds**

# **WELCOME**

**and aging student-council  
weenies. Imagine a town  
where George Will is  
considered a sex symbol.  
Imagine a town where Brent  
Scowcroft is considered fun**

*by Richard Stengel*





# TO WONK CITY

**A Desperate  
Search for  
Style, Wit and  
Culture in  
Our Nation's  
Capital**

*What's bad for  
America is good  
for Washington.*

History proves it.

The U.S. was  
bruised in the  
War of 1812, but  
Washington was  
grandly rebuilt after  
the British burned  
it. To inspire Union

troops  
billeted in  
Washington  
during the Civil  
War, President

Lincoln ordered the completion  
of the Capitol dome. World

War I roused Wash-  
ington from its back-  
woods insularity, trans-  
forming it from a lazy  
southern city. During the  
Depression, New Dealers  
descended on the capital  
and make-work programs  
helped modern Washington  
become modern Washing-  
ton. World War II revived  
it, and the federal bureau-  
cracy doubled in size.  
While Americans rioted  
in the streets during  
the 1960s, fancy new  
housing was con-  
structed for all the  
Great Society



idealists who had moved to the District of Columbia.

National recessions are generally boom times for Washington (someone has to put out all those tomes of statistics). Washingtonians are prudish and cautious by nature, but the city thrives on catastrophe, and what really puts a spring in the step of wing-tipped Washingtonians is a scandal. Watergate made Washington feel alive, and it turned *The Washington Post* into something more than a logy provincial daily. Just as the Reagan era was drifting off into somnambulism, the Iran-contra affair jolted Washingtonians awake again.

Scandal and national turmoil make Washingtonians feel important and validate their existence. Washington has always been a town with an inferiority complex, fearful that its particular dullness was peripheral to the life of the republic. (JFK's line that it was a "city of southern efficiency and northern charm" did not help much.) Being a capital, Washington was measured against London and Paris — and simply didn't compare. New York, a real city, was just up the coast. But a crisis, a scandal, a national tragedy, always served to dispel the fear that Washington was marginal.

Washington is a very serious kind of town. (It's also the kind of town where people constantly use the construction "This is a \_\_\_\_\_ kind of town.") Not just the president and National Security Council staff members but *everybody* here considers himself, and what he does, terrifyingly important. Young men cross the street as though the fate of the newly expanded free world hung in the balance. No one in Washington ever says, "Hey, lighten up." The people who come here have always been self-important, and Washington simply exacerbates the trait. It is a town of earnest former student-council presidents who drive Honda Accords.

If it weren't for bad style, Washington wouldn't have any style at all. In fact, Washingtonians like to think that they are above or maybe beyond style, and that whatever style they have is based exclusively on substance. Style is not only nonexistent, it is deeply mistrusted. Style, they seem to think, is for New Yorkers.

But Washington does have its own peculiar style, and it is based on the complex hierarchy of power in the capital; on the obnoxious, boorish atmosphere that an obsession with power creates; and on the fact that you can't get a decent pair of shoes in the whole city. What follows is a meandering, highly incomplete guide to the native style and customs of our nation's capital.

There are two classes of people in Washington: those with power and those without it. The rule is, if you don't have power, nuzzle up to someone who does. It's a very simple equation: the greater your proximity to power, the greater your importance. It's like the record business — either you're a name or else you work for one, as in "I'm with Whitney." On Capitol Hill sober young women flash their tags and say, "I'm with Senator Warner," or "I staff Darman." Washington is a city of power-by-association. That's why one Washington decorating ritual is to have framed snapshots of yourself with the powerful on the walls of your first-floor guest bathroom.

People don't really go to Washington to serve; they go to be servile. Flattery is the lingua franca of the town. There is always someone to suck up to. Nancy Reagan had Katharine Graham, Baker has Bush, and even Bush has Gorbachev. For some reason, the higher people ascend, the less able they are to detect the toadyish behavior that is directed toward them. In Washington everyone secretly wants to feel like a senator — even the senators. So suck up, write thank-you notes, and you too could be president.

The bitter truth, however, is that in Washington there are really very few people who have power that counts — fewer than a thousand. Most people are

just cheerleaders, hangers-on, supporters, voyeurs, lobbyists and assorted remoras. People in Washington invariably declare some variation on the following: "This town revolves around power, not money." In other words, your résumé is more important than your wallet. This truism is used to explain the success of smart and shrewd but impecunious men such as Dick Darman and David Stockman, and the ultimate failure of rich bullies such as Donald Regan.

"People in Washington have a real ambivalence about money," says Jim Glassman, editor of the Capitol Hill trade paper *Roll Call*. "Everyone in Congress is fascinated with how rich everyone else is." Wealthy politicians are profoundly envied. They can ride

above the need to receive honoraria or to concoct complicated schemes under which book publishers kick back royalties for a tedious collection of platitudes. Ted Kennedy is envied not for his bachelor rampages (see "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington — and Fondles Anything That Moves," page 82) or even for his lustrous hair but because he never, ever has to think twice about picking up the check. People here are perversely curious about money. *How much does George Will really pull in? Gee, C. Boyden Gray must have a pile to buy that house in Georgetown.* In New York the currency really is money, so discussing how much

people are worth is banal. In Washington discussing money is suspect and even vaguely dirty, and therefore it provides a secret frisson that it cannot in New York.

The yearning for power imbues Washington with its unique symbiosis of personal and professional relationships. No one in Washington is just a friend, and no one is just a professional acquaintance. The reporter and the congressional staffer are pals, but the fact that each can be helpful to the other adds a Machiavellian fillip to their "friendship." When Congressman Les Aspin lived with a producer of *Face the Nation*, he was an inveterate *Face the Nation* guest. Lee Atwater has been known to form intimate bonds with the Fourth Estate, to the mutual benefit of both parties. In Washington all friendships are potential venues for professional enhancement (see "Bland Ambition," page 76).

People are valued *for*, not *despite*, their

"People judge your appearance in the first 20 seconds, and in Washington you can't afford to be perceived as slick"



conflicts of interest. In Washington you want someone whose fingers are in lots and lots of pies. Bob Strauss's relationships with lobbyists, politicians, journalists, bankers and Jesse Jackson make him more valuable as a contact. Buy a share of Bob Strauss and he may advance your interests, precisely because he has so many other shareholders.

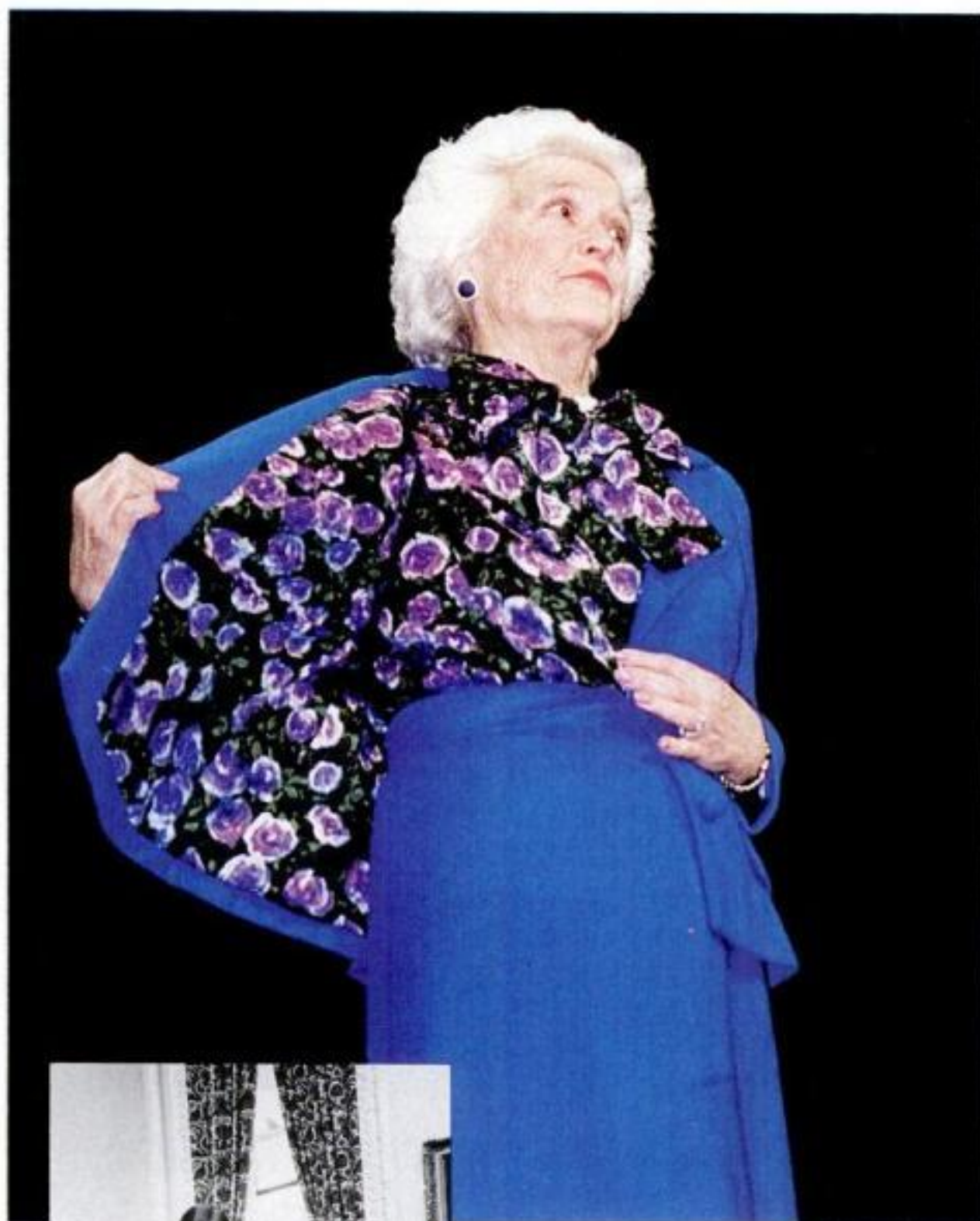
One of the virtues of having power is that it exempts you from the normal give-and-take of conversation. If you're powerful and you utter something intended to be funny, there is always a clique of flunkies around to laugh appreciatively. Which is how people such as John Sununu and Jim Wright got their reputations as wits. (Wyoming senator Alan Simpson, however, is authentically funny.) Power makes even drones seem clever. Is there any place in the world except Washington where someone like Brent Scowcroft would be considered the life of the party? Men of power endlessly repeat the same musty stories and tired *bons mots*, because no one ever says to them, "Sir, you've told that filibuster-over-the-lumber-tariff story before."

Irony is all but unknown in Washington. After all, what is there to be ironic about when matters of geopolitical gravity demand attention 24 hours a day?

Archness is deemed a sign of unseriousness. Irony, like style, is considered somehow unseemly, evidence of a lightweight mind. Is it any wonder, then, that Washington comedians are so insistently unfunny? Was Art Buchwald ever clever? The last time someone said, "Have you read Buchwald?" was during the Kennedy administration—and that's because Art was pals with Jack. Mark Russell and the Capitol Steps are not comedians but court jesters, practicing a lank Whiffenpoof kind of comedy that flatters as much as it pokes fun.

Humor in Washington must never genuinely mock anyone. The old Don Rickles would have bombed inside the Beltway. Ronald Reagan's humor was considered charming because he made fun of himself, not others. The one time he aimed his flabby gags at someone else was when he made a joke during the campaign about Dukakis's being an invalid. The joke bombed and backfired on the teller. Good old Ronnie seemed mean and cramped. The rule is, Mock people in private but never in public. In public your enemy is "the esteemed and able senator from the great state of Rhode Island," even if it's Claiborne Pell to whom you're referring.

Clockwise from top: Barbara Bush exhibits an atypical floral extravaganza; comedy group the Capitol Steps poised for dippy, junior-college-evocative theatrics; Donald Regan—the man who put the active in activewear; Pat Buchanan works a pair of hose over his muscular gams.



Washington, like Hollywood, is a place of institutional humor, of celebrity roasts. Roasts work in both places because each city is a hothouse, one-industry town. Roasts epitomize Washington humor, filled as they are with phony bonhomie, towel-snapping giggles, exaggerated intimacy from strangers and self-aggrandizement masquerading as self-deprecation.

The key to mastering Washington style and customs is to be inconspicuous. The idea is to blend in with the prevailing style, which is stylelessness. No one wants to be too *too*, to look too good, seem too clever, drive too fancy a car. Sports cars in Washington are about as common as *Inside Seka* tapes in the White House. In general you don't want anyone to notice you for any reason other than that you're smart and that you work hard.

No one in Washington would ever ask the question "What are you?"—as in, *What*

*is your ethnic background?*

This is taboo. Everyone wants to belong to the bland, indistinguishable white-bread sameness of the capital. The correct answer to the "What are you?" question is "By God, I'm an American." Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute says that for a

long time "[Washington's] most interesting ethnic restaurant was a local Greek one." The District's only genuine ethnicity is to be found in its taxi drivers and the strange multiplicity of Ethiopian restaurants around Adams Morgan. (The latter is ritually cited by Washingtonians to show how cosmopolitan the city is.)

Dress in Washington is a uniform. As with any uniform, the idea is to eschew variation, to be consistent, to conform.



For men the basic costume consists of the traditional dark, sacklike, two-button Robert Hall- or Brooks Brothers-style American suit. A *Full Washington*, as journalist Mickey Kaus once defined it, is an off-the-rack suit, a too-short tan trench coat and wing tips. Loafers, especially Italian loafers, are considered deeply frivolous.

But where all is equal and regimented, fashion accoutrements are the one opportunity for a little flair, a small show of individuality. Thus the tie makes the man in Washington.

"I feel ties are the exclamation point of men's fashion," says Linda Saffos, manager of Britches of Georgetowne (note ye olde extra *e*), one of Washington's few worthwhile men's stores. She counsels men of power on how to dress. "People judge your appearance in the first 20 seconds," she says, "and in Washington you can't afford to be perceived as slick and trendy."

Basically, you want the suit and shirt to recede into muteness and the tie to stand out. "In ties," she says, "red is always powerful, always confident. It is recommended by any haberdasher to be worn during an interview." Yet in the Washington color war, Saffos is a traditionalist, sadly behind the fashion revolution of the Bush years.

When it comes to power in Washington, red is now dead. In perhaps his boldest move as secretary of State, Jim Baker has pioneered a reckless power-tie switch from the red-burgundy color spectrum to a bright palette of blue-green. During the presidential campaign Baker and his aides would compete to wear the most splendiferous tie. Baker usually won with a phosphorescent-green job.

Power guys took notice. Baker was the force behind the throne, and if *he* was switching to green...Not for them the hackneyed red Sam Donaldson power tie. Soon White House aides and State Department wonks were sporting bright blue-green neckwear, ties that seemed to stand out a foot in front of their suits, power talismans that mystically endowed them with foreign-policy machismo. Now Bush Cabinet meetings are knotted with so many green ties that it looks like St. Patrick's Day at the White House.

The dowdiness of Washington women is well documented. When *Washington Post* columnist Richard Cohen pointed out how unfashionable Washington women were, he was widely and publicly flagellated for it. The women of Washington have been called the Frumpiest Women in America. Which means, of course, that George Bush's wife is the first frump.

Yes, the women of Washington do wear floppy red polka-dot bow ties with their too-crisp, below-the-knee blue suits. They do stride to work in their Reeboks and then slip into a pair of battered flats behind their desks. They do ladle on the blue eye shadow and zinc-pink lipstick. It's all true.

Like almost everyone who must wear a uniform, Washingtonians make egregiously bad clothing choices in their off-hours. Eveningwear in Washington is often just a gussied-up version of daytimewear. At Kennedy Center openings, where Washingtonians grudgingly inoculate themselves with culture, there are always a fair number of wraparound corduroy skirts and fleecy cardigan sweaters with a few sprays of sequins on the sleeves.

Yet things are changing in Washington. Presidential Secret Service agents (who are really just mannequins with little earphones and big guns) used to dress like the clean-cut Ohio State offensive line circa 1960. But they have forsaken that stodgy fifties style and are now looking downright with-it. With their ubiquitous Ray-Ban shades, double-breasted Italian suits and moussed hair with a single curl falling across the forehead, they look like nothing so much as vain and sulky Chippendales dancers who happen to

wear little earphones and big guns.

Washington is a city of alumni networks. Everybody is a member of one. There is the Jimmy Carter Alumni Association, the *Washington Monthly* Alumni Association (Mickey Kaus, Michael Kinsley, James Fallows, Taylor Branch, Nick Lemann), the Flacks Turned Pundits Alumni Association (David "Mr. Potato Head" Gergen, Ron Nessen, Chris Matthews, John Buckley), the Unindicted Co-conspirators Alumni Association (Henry Kissinger, Lawrence Eagleburger, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Elliott Abrams). Often the bonds of association are forged in political campaigns. Thus someone from the Paul Simon campaign goes to

work for Mike Dukakis and now serves on Senator Tim Wirth's staff. George Bush's younger brother and Nick Brady were chums at Yale. Everything connects in Washington if you go back far enough.

There is very little crossbreeding among these circles, however. Separate networks mingle, but seldom intimately. Hill staffers date Hill staffers; journalists go out with journalists; lawyers cohabit with lawyers. Strangers are to be avoided—unless you're a lobbyist, in which case practically any stranger is your new best friend.

But what about other groups?

Washington has the same diversity of occupations as any other postindustrial city; it's just that all the occupations except those that involve politics or journalism are invisible.

Washington is the only society in the world where journalists, regular beat reporters, are on the A-list—even at the top of the list. Elsewhere journalists are still considered grungy and at least slightly outré, wage apes lugging Toshiba's. But not in Washington. In Washington, journalists are the *interesting* people. There, national journalists for reputable publications are in the highest caste. They are treated as members of "society." "Being a journalist in Washington," says ex-Washington journalist Walter Shapiro, now a writer for *Time* in New York, "is like being a Muslim cleric in the holy city of Qum."

Journalists are important because they are the handmaidens of power, the mouthpieces for everyone who wants to communicate

In Washington  
you never  
have to ask  
someone  
what he does—  
someone  
else will have  
told you





# "Yes, I'm tired of looking like Tipper Gore!

Make me look like, oh...Liddy Dole!"

## Introducing the Capital's Hair Kings

In Washington there are five basic haircuts for people of ambition: the style George Bush's mother gave him when he was five and that he still wears; the serviceable quasi comb-over, worn by Bill Bradley, Sam Nunn and Dick Cheney; the Ken-doll-by-way-of-JFK cut, favored by Jack Kemp, Dan Quayle and the politically late Gary Hart; the lady's power bob, preferred by Pat Schroeder and, in its primitive version, by Marilyn Quayle; and the fluffy, glamorous-by-Washington-standards shag, popularized by Fawn Hall and Deborah Gore Dean. But while there are really only five distinct capital hairstyles, there are many, many hairdressers. Who are these stylists with such proximity to power? Who trims the tresses that adorn the scalps that cover the skulls that protect the brains of the men and women who lead the nation? Let's meet them.

**SHARIF SHAH-BILAL.** At Bubbles on Capitol Hill, where they say they're doing more and more perms every day, politics and hair often collide. Sharif Shah-Bilal, a 41-year-old South African, is a self-proclaimed "hairdresser-with-a-conscience-lobbyist." He likes to lecture his important clients (whose names he won't divulge, although he says they are all members of Congress and other power brokers) on the issues of the day. "Where I can change hairstyles, I do. I'll try to change their minds and their votes too. I'm lobbying them all the time. I've got them in the sink with the hot water, and I say, 'I know how you voted on South Africa—why?'"

What would Shah-Bilal consider his greatest nightmare? "Oh, Marilyn Quayle," he says. "I don't want to touch that one!"

**DIANE HARRIS.** One of the most popular barbers in the Senate Barbershop, a for-men-only salon in the bowels of the Russell Senate Office Building, is Diane Harris, a 30-ish blond from Florida. At the barbershop senators and their staff can get 1970s-style haircuts at 1970s-style prices. A basic trim is \$4.50, while a layered cut—that's a "style cut, blow-dry, no shampoo"—runs \$6.50. But it's not just the low prices that attract swells such as Senator Steve Symms; it's the stylists too. During our visit, we caught Symms, an heir to a fruit fortune, ambling into the barbershop and extending a hearty "Hoo, hoo—can I get a hug?" to Harris, who, in the style of the D.C. coquette, wears her bleached blond hair in a sort of Farrah-ish mane. Then, as Symms and Harris stepped behind the frosted-glass door of the private senatorial hair hut, a legislative aide and regular barbershop customer tipped us off to one of Washington's least discussed scandals, one involving the senior senator from Delaware. "You've got to mention Bill Roth's toupee," he said. "It's the worst."

**BRUNO DESSANGE.** Unlike the Senate Barbershop, the Bruno Dessange salon in Georgetown is definitely unisex, but its attitudes toward hair care are still stuck in the Watergate era. "Washington is at least five years behind New York," says one of Dessange's stylists, who requested anonymity. "Men don't take care of themselves here. In D.C., if a man goes to a salon or takes care of himself, people say, 'Oh, he's a sissy!'"

At the mention of Marilyn Quayle's hair, the stylist shivers with delight. "I'd love to change her style, her attitude, update her look. I'd at least get rid of her middle part."

**BERNARD PORTELLI.** Like many of his colleagues, the man who runs Okyo Hair International in Georgetown wishes D.C. women would loosen up and let him try out some of the wild hairstyles he's learned at New York hair shows. "Washington women are very conservative; they ask for nothing fancy," says Bernard Portelli, a French-born 39-year-old whose clients include Elizabeth Dole and Ethel Kennedy. "They just want to look like everybody else," he chuckles, "—boring." And Marilyn Quayle? "I'd love to do her hair!" he says. "No one knows who does it. They say she does it herself."

**ROBIN WEIR AND YVES GRAUX.** Weir, Nancy Reagan's former coiffeur, is the somewhat waspish Mr. Hair of Washington. Though his days as first hairdresser are over, the 40-year-old Weir is still considered vogueish on the Hill, counting among his customers South Dakota senator Larry Pressler, Abigail Van Buren and Dr. Ruth Westheimer. Yet this does not keep him from being candid about Washington hair. "It's not trend-setting," he snickers. "It's not even trend-following!"

Weir is eager to discuss the incumbent White House stylist, Yves Graux of Rendez-Vous in the Park Hyatt Hotel. As predictable as squabbling Republican politicians Alfonse D'Amato and Rudolph Giuliani, these squabbling Republican hairdressers don't allow any notion of party unity to interfere with their fundamental beliefs about each other. "Four years ago," Weir says, "when Graux used to cut hair in the Reagan White House, he went in there after the president had left and took the sweepings of the president's hair off the floor. Then, a couple of years later, Graux sent out a press release that said he had this hair and he wanted to sell it for \$10,000!"

Graux, who did not return our phone calls, was expelled from the White House in 1982 after what James Baker called a "raging dispute" over the tight quarters and general cleanliness of the White House barbershop. Some clients went with him, including Barbara Bush, on whose coattails Graux has coasted back into White House favor. Weir accepts this reverse stoically. "Barbara Bush is never going to come to me," he says. "I haven't trashed her, but I have said some things I'm sure she didn't appreciate about her hair." Still, Weir is eager to get back into the White House. Virtually unprompted, he blurts out the name of the woman whose hair he'd like to work on: "Quayle. I like her. She seems like a fun person to have as a client."

As for that piece of information that only a lady like Mrs. Reagan and her hairdresser are supposed to know for sure: Clairol Moongold.

—Elissa Schappell and Andrea Rider



with the world outside the Beltway. In the city's social hierarchy a reporter for *The New York Times* has a higher standing than almost any member of Congress, except perhaps a committee chairman. The heart of the Washington aristocracy, which has been frozen for 20 years, is still Kay and Ben and Sally, all of *The Washington Post*.

Television is God, though, and those journalists who are on television are now the seraphim, the elect. National TV reporters used to be the most visible stars, but they have recently been eclipsed by the video pundits (see "Ask Not for Whom the Bell Tolls; It Tolls for Thee, Marlin Fitzwater," page 46). They may look and sound like nerds, but the boys of *The McLaughlin Group*, *This Week With David Brinkley* and *The Capital Gang* have become the intellectual studs in town.

The video pundits are generally smartish, bespectacled print journalists who write at length in their respective publications but are paid to become the political equivalent of local-TV film critics who simply give a thumbs-up or -down to the latest Eddie Murphy vehicle. *The McLaughlin Group* is professional political wrestling. See Pat "Mad Dog" Buchanan clothesline Mort "White Hat" Kondracke. Watch John "Hands" McLaughlin put a foreign-policy headlock on Fred "Mr. Reasonable" Barnes. As in professional wrestling, the antagonists are cast as good guys and bad guys; the winners and losers are always scripted. The participants sweat and grimace and wince, but it's all cheap theater.

Now that print journalists have become TV stars, they are straying into even more egregious conflicts of interest. Journalists always advised politicians on what to say (Ben Bradlee for Jack Kennedy; George Will for Ronald Reagan), but now they are giving speeches themselves. For money. In receiving honoraria from businesses and trade groups for their wisdom, these journalists are acquiring the same tainted appearance-of-beholdenness that clings to members of Congress. The deeply cynical right-wing columnists Evans and Novak even have seminars for businessmen, who must pay a steep fee to attend. To pull in paying customers, Evans and Novak recruit political figures, the once and future subjects of their columns, to be guest speakers. These are just the sort of journalists who will screech about the public's right to know. But what they really mean is *the public's right to hear me*.

The place where the various alumni networks come together is the dinner table. Washington is a dinner-party kind of town. Restaurants are not as bad as they used to be (spots such as i Ricchi or Nora are perfectly nice), but wallpaper and foie gras do not a restaurant make—what makes a restaurant is the patrons. In Washington it is hard to appreciate the food, because while you are eating, everyone else is mentally deducting the cost of the meal. Nora, in a brave, desperate attempt to shoo away expense-account lawyers, refuses to take credit cards.

The real social lubrication goes on at home, at smallish dinner parties in Georgetown and DuPont Circle. The model is set by the Bushes. The president's "at home" dinners feature a Tex-Mex buffet, his-and-hers first-family warm-up suits, a movie (*My Stepmother Is an Alien*, for instance) and popcorn. This is the most coveted invitation in town. Those darling Bushes, so *cazib* and comfy, so relaxed and unpretentious. The only problem is that these dinners, supposedly for friends, are usually for reporters and politicians whom the president is trying to butter up.

Private dinners in Washington seem informal but actually follow strict rules. Typically they are catered. Even if the hostess has cooked, she makes it seem like she just tossed the whole thing together. The reason for such modesty is that no woman wants to appear to be a hostess anymore. Be-

ing a hostess is no longer an occupation. Women *work* and don't have time for spending hours over flower and napkin arrangements—or at least don't want to let on that they have the time. Guests arrive at eight o'clock sharp, drink next to nothing and leave by eleven.

Even journalist turned novelist Sally Quinn, who could easily be the doyenne of Washington hostesses, has abdicated. Quinn and her husband, Ben Bradlee, traditionally hold a New Year's Eve party at their house, but last year Sally, working gal that she is, did not have enough time to organize the party, so she held it at City Cafe, where couples paid \$100 at the door. The obligation to appear substantial and serious outweighed

the quaint custom of entertaining at home and not charging your guests for it.

No one at a Washington dinner is ever introduced thus: "Mary, this is Bob Johnson." Introductions are mini-curricula vitae and are garlanded with all sorts of significant information. "Mary, I'd like you to meet Bob Johnson, Cornell '75. He worked for Jack Kemp and is now at the Department of Labor, overseeing the paperwork-reduction program." In Washington you never have to ask someone what he does; someone else will have told you. The introduction is a way of showing how important everyone is—and a way of reinforcing the tribal connections among all at the table.

It is often said that being a "great conversationalist" is an important thing in this town. But what being a great conversationalist in Washington means is not the ability to hold forth with a Wildean flurry of epigrams or a subtle theory on subatomic physics as a metaphor for the tearing down of the Berlin Wall. Being a great conversationalist simply means being in possession of pellets of gossip that no one else has. The dullest timeserver who knows one piece of the inside story of the rivalry between John Sununu and EPA administrator William Reilly will seem like the very soul of wit at a Washington dinner.

Even if you don't have the latest White House tidbit, you can still get by if you salt your conversation with arcane acronyms. Say someone is talking about the savings-and-loan situation. You might casually say,

As the action  
has moved  
to Berlin and  
Moscow,  
the city seems  
to have  
slowed down  
a bit,  
become more  
Ottawa-like



"Well, yes, and while FSLIC has been replaced by OTS, RTC and REFCORP, OSHA can't hold a candle to FIFRA." In other words, the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation has given way to the Office of Thrift Supervision, the Resolution Trust Corporation and the Resolution Funding Corporation, and so on.

British newspaper correspondents are much beloved at Washington dinner parties. They are brought in like roguish house pets. Those incorrigible Brits! They drink and burp and curse and bring up subjects other than the federal budget deficit. They are allowed, even encouraged, to commit faux pas. The other guests smile benignly while secretly feeling superior to the poor sod who can afford not to take the world so seriously.

There are a few simple guidelines that ought to be observed before any Washington dinner. First, you must have read both *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* that day. This is literally more important than shaving or wearing a tie. The dos are simple; the don'ts are more elaborate. A Washington dinner party is a mine field of potential missteps. For example:

Don't brag about how many drugs you did in college.

Don't mention your analyst.

Don't wear all black; people will assume you're in mourning.

Don't use foreign phrases in your conversation, unless it's *laissez-faire*.

Don't personalize an issue, saying, for instance, you support abortion because you had one.

Don't let on that you've never heard of Francis Fukuyama.

If you're seated next to Sandra Day O'Connor, don't use the same line on her that ex-Redskins fullback John Riggins did—to wit, "Loosen up, Sandy baby."

And while you can mention that you once worked for someone like John Tower or Gary Hart, imply that if the poor fellow had only taken your advice, he'd still be a power in this town. The moment that would-be power broker Richard Holbrooke saw that his man Al Gore was losing the race for the 1988 Democratic nomination, he started feeding precisely this line to reporters.

In Washington failure marks a man. Yet there are exceptions. Many in Washington live off past failure. Bob Beckel is still a player, although his claim to fame rests on being the genius behind the Mondale campaign. Eddie Mahe Jr. is still around, resting on the laurels of having masterminded the \$12 million, one-delegate Connally-for-president juggernaut. Mostly it's a matter of career spin control. The most important thing is not to be blamed for a real

Clockwise from top: A silly yet very serious student-council kind of vice president for America's silly yet very serious student-council kind of town; Henry Kissinger encounters a member of the clown community; permanent presidential adviser Brent "Nobody Hates Me" Scowcroft in the late Ford era; boldly nonconformist James Baker has sparked a D.C. neckwear revolution.



debacle. John Sasso can come back; Susan Estrich cannot. She was the Dukakis culprit. As long as you can plausibly slough off blame, you're okay. Culpability is what you want to avoid.

In Washington you can't re-create yourself as easily as you can in New York. In New York the commodity is celebrity; it doesn't matter

what you're famous for as long as you're famous. Roy Cohn or David Dinkins can reconfigure himself and go on to even greater notoriety. But in Washington, failure sticks. It's a stain that cannot be wiped completely clean. Bud McFarlane wanders Washington like a zombie; Mike Deaver acts chipper, but not many people buy it; no one will be knocking down the doors of Sad Sam Pierce's consulting company. People remember in Washington. Washington is not and has never been the city of the second chance.

The difference between someone



like Stuart Eizenstat, a Carter aide who still gets quoted regularly, and someone like Bud McFarlane is that while Eizenstat was first mate on a ship that went down, he never committed the Big Fuck-Up. In Washington, when things begin to go seriously wrong for you, everyone deserts you. This is the down side of the professional-friendship culture. And if it looks like you are going to become the symbol for a whole gamut of failure—as Deaver and McFarlane and Tower did—people act as though they never knew you.

Washington, as many have noted, is a schadenfreude kind of town. People always feel a little twinge of joy at another's fall. This is more true of Washington than New York, because in Washington everyone is playing in the same arena. A dip in the fortune of one player results in a barely perceptible rise in the fortunes of a great many others. Any defeat for a Democrat is a victory for a Republican, and vice versa. The Nancy Reagan backlash is Barbara Bush's gain; Sam Pierce's mess is Jack Kemp's cleanup; Alan Cranston's fall may be Congressman Mel Levine's rise. But it is a secret glee. No one can be seen to be gloating; that would be unseemly. You're supposed to furrow your brow and show deep concern that Ed Meese has resigned.

From the Kennedy administration through Reagan, people in Washington always maintained some version of the following line: *Yes, we used to be a southern backwater, but now we're cosmopolitan and sophisticated; we're at the very center of things—a world capital worthy of the name.* You could chalk up such boosterism to the city's inferiority complex, but there was also a certain truth to it.

No one is talking much about being a world capital anymore. Washington seems to have slowed down a bit, to have become more Ottawa-like. The small expectations of the Bush years offer the prospect of a Greater United States shrinking into a Little America. Washington seems to be returning to its past as a Podunk with pretensions to grandeur that cared as little about the outside world as the outside world cared about it. Dear old Washington. With America no longer at the political or economic center of things, with Japan and a reunified Germany leading the way, what becomes of the first city of a second-string superpower? It returns to its dreamy days as a dusty provincial capital, happily absorbed in its own dreary private business. ☛

# Vanity, thy name is Congress

## The C-SPAN Beauty Plan

### The Illustrated History of Hair (and Grooming), Part VII

by Teresa Riordan

Squinting into klieg lights, Representative Ron Wyden addresses a half dozen TV cameras and a squad of provincial correspondents hoping for an easy human-interest story. "This subcommittee has uncovered convincing evidence," Wyden says, "that in the multibillion-dollar-per-year field of cosmetic surgery... some practitioners... are improperly trained, operate in inadequately equipped settings and hoodwink patients through false or misleading advertising."

A bit of pedestrian grandstanding from a media-hungry congressman? Sure. But Wyden may also simply be looking out for his congressional brethren in a post-C-SPAN world, where how you look on TV is even more important than having rich friends with whom to exchange favors. Indeed, since C-SPAN started televising Congress in session in 1979, Capitol Hill's consumption of hair spray, toupee adhesive and the services of plastic surgeons has soared.

Consider this: in a society where 40 percent of all middle-aged men have lost significant quantities of hair, *only 5.2 percent of Congress is conspicuously bald.*








Of course, a generation before C-SPAN the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debates heralded the political importance of being telegenic. And one year before that a man named Norman Orentreich had done something equally important for the course of political history: he'd invented the hair transplant. Pioneers Strom Thurmond, a Republican, and William Proxmire, a Democrat, offered their naked pates to science in a bipartisan gesture. Thurmond's transplant gave him the hairline of a lobotomy patient; Proxmire's looked like a crop failure. The trend nevertheless caught on.

The conventional wisdom is that C-SPAN has homogenized congressmen's personal style. But has it really? What about Representative Silvio Conte's bad plaids and green-and-yellow patchwork golf pants, and his recent appearance in the House press gallery wearing a pig nose? And why has Bozo-The-Clown orange become an increasingly popular hair color on the hill? Former speaker of the House Jim Wright and Senators Thurmond and Alan Cranston are just a few of the gentlemen who prefer orange.

Congressmen have also adapted remarkably well to the exigencies of makeup. Many use hair spray daily and keep cosmetics at the office in case they are suddenly inspired or instructed to shoot a video press release. Some have taken such a shine to cosmetology that if they arrive late to a live TV interview, they demand that the broadcasters stall until their makeup is just so. Most congressmen leave TV studios with their makeup on—where it stays for the rest of the day. This is not because they are rushing to make a floor vote but because they like the way it looks.

Senator John Warner is an acknowledged consumer authority on cosmetics. Though he is partial to Max Factor Pan-Stik foundation, he stays away from all commercial hair-grooming products. "You'll have to excuse me," he will say while spitting generously into his palms and smearing saliva on his head, "but this is the only thing that works." As the senator from Virginia has often said, showing an unlikely capacity for self-awareness, "No one ever comments on what I say; they comment on how I look."



| MEMBER  | ALLEGED VANITY   | COMMENTS   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Sen. Bill Roth (R-Del.)</b>  | Wig  | When he emotes, furrowed brow rolls up under the wig, like a tambour desktop, and back down again                            |
| <b>Sen. Joe Biden (D-Del.)</b>  | Teeth capped; hair transplant  | Always smiles, usually at inappropriate times, because media adviser told him it would make him look more honest             |
| <b>Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.)</b>  | Dyed hair tangerine during 1984 presidential campaign  |    |
| <b>Sen. Frank Murkowski (D-Alas.)</b>   | Dyes hair  | Hair went from white to black overnight in 1989  |
| <b>Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.)</b>  | Comb-over  | "It would be fun to watch him in a pool," says a former Senate staffer   |
| <b>Rep. Robert Davis (R-Mich.)</b>  | Wig; eye tuck  | Is a mortician, so artificial appearance enhancement comes naturally   |
| <b>Sen. J. Bennett Johnston (D-La.)</b>   | Comb-over; skin darkener on scalp  | Sweats rivulets of sepia   |
| <b>Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.)</b>  | Permanent tan; Brylcreem   |    |
| <b>Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.)</b>   | Nonsurgical overhaul: new hair, new clothes  |    |
| <b>Rep. Dante Fascell (D-Fla.)</b>  | Regular manicures  |    |
| <b>Rep. Tom Foley (speaker of the House)</b>  | Optifast liquid diet   | Fifteen-pound weight loss as SPY went to press   |
| <b>Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.)</b>  | Contact lenses; blow-dried demibouffant; new clothes; weight loss; bodybuilding; liposuction | Spoils the effect by wearing bad shoes   |
|  |  |   |
| <b>Sen. John Warner (R-Va.)</b>   | Foundation; regular manicures  | Insists on doing his own makeup for TV unless he knows the station's makeup artist   |
| <b>Rep. Floyd Spence (R-S.C.)</b>   | Hair transplant  | Though he denies the hair transplant, a spokesman insists his hair eerily started growing again after a 1988 lung transplant |
| <b>Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.)</b>   | Hair transplant; dyes hair orange and scalp brown; applies eyeliner to hairline              | Face gets streaked with orange in rain   |
|   |  |    |

**Rep. Joe Kennedy (D-Mass.)** Permed hair; permanent tan

Every two months curls suddenly get coil-spring tight

**Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.)** Plastic surgery reduced prominent chin; under-eye concealer; serious hair spray user



**Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.)** Girdle

Has serious dandruff problem

**Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.)** Numerous (failed) liquid diets; girdle

Huge weight fluctuations have given skin unattractive elasticity; wears girdle ostensibly because of 1960s plane-crash injury

**Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.)** Wears dyed hair in a pompadour

In certain light, hair has iridescence of pigeon plumage

**Sen. Alan Dixon (D-Ill.)** Comb-over; manicures

Is a regular at the Senate beauty shop

**Rep. Tom McMillen (D-Md.)** Dyes hair

Insists that pool chlorine is darkening his hair

**Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.)** Comb-over; serious hair spray user; eyeglasses fetish

Wears aviator frames for defense hearings, horn-rims for intelligence hearings; once ordered an aide to call every hair salon in Washington and stockpile cans of his favorite, about-to-be-discontinued hair spray

**Rep. Michael Oxley (R-Ohio)** Permanent tan

A lobbyist: "He wins the George Hamilton Award"

**Sen. Larry Pressler (R-S.D.)** Dyes hair

Hair appears purple in some light

**Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.)** Dyes eyelashes; serious hair spray user

"The TV lights washed him out—he looked like a Hitler youth," says a former employee

**Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.)** Comb-over



**Sen. Don Riegle (D-Mich.)** Hair transplant

**Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.)** Liquid diet—lost 100 pounds

Proposed legislation requiring that federal-employee health plans pay for obesity treatment

**Rep. Dan Glickman (D-Kans.)** Comb-over

Wears Snoopy tie clips

**Sen. Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.)** Dyes eyebrows; teeth capped



**Rep. Lynn Martin (R-Ill.)** Teeth capped; new hair color and style; new clothes





ILLUSTRATION BY MARTIN KOZLOWSKI



“HEY,

A Worldwide Tour of America's Dopiast Diplomats by Rachel Urquhart

JAMBO!

DOESN'T  
ANYONE  
HERE  
TALK

AMERICAN?”

Shopping-mall magnates, Pizza Hut franchisees, nativist cretins—these are America's ambassadors, the men and women George Bush and his predecessors have posted to exotic locales in order that they may grapple with the delicate, often treacherous nuances of international diplomacy. Yee-haw!

*Darkness has enveloped Norway. Most of the stalwart inhabitants of one small town in the north have turned in for the evening. Most, but not all. From one sleepy neighborhood a lone male voice trails over the rooftops. It is a croaky voice, the voice of a man who has apparently returned from an evening of celebration. The man is yelling and banging on doors. A woman, frightened by the ferocious noise outside, summons the police. They arrive, restrain the man and escort him back to his hotel room. A complaint is lodged against him, but nothing happens. He has diplomatic immunity. He is the American ambassador to Norway....*

*It is Christmas Day in Nicaragua, and Managua has just been wracked by a devastating earthquake. Buildings are crumbling, power lines have fallen, people are dying. But over at the American embassy there are more pressing problems. Despite the turmoil, the ambassador has managed to commandeer a plane from the United States Air Force and has flown his*



sick cat to Panama for treatment. Embassy officials, meanwhile, have been barred from the embassy grounds—and therefore from access to one of the few shortwave radios still working in the quake-ravaged country. Why? Because they have been careless: they have upset the ambassador's wife by trampling the embassy gardens, and now she has put her foot down and said Enough....

*It is time for the United States ambassador to a Scandinavian country to come home. Somehow, despite numerous and increasingly pointed State Department cables summoning him Stateside (Thank you, you've done a good job; now let's give someone else a chance), he doesn't seem to be getting the message. Eventually Foggy Bottom decides that some personal intervention is required, and so a U.S. official is dispatched to the embassy to explain matters to the ambassador in person. He arrives with a high-ranking official of the country's government in tow. Once ushered in, they are kept waiting beyond all endurance. Finally the U.S. official decides to search for the ambassador. Before long he locates him in an upstairs bedroom. He is watching an X-rated movie with a local girl—a rustle, a shift—ah... make that two girls....*

Once upon a time, long, long ago, the United States government took pride in sending nonprofessionals to represent our country abroad. We did it to be different, to rebel against everything we perceived as monarchical, stodgy and dishonest. We associated professional diplomats with Europe, and Europe with professional lying—and professional lying was something we found so galling in those quaint times that our second secretary of State, Edmund Randolph, decreed that our envoys should be characterized by, among other qualities, “a horror of finesse and chicanery.” Later we asked that they not appear in European courts dressed in their finery but wear “the simple dress of the American citizen.”

It was a time when such homespun requirements had to be requested specifically. Not anymore.

“I’m so proud of my fucking candidate I could shit.”

No, you can’t get more simply, naturally, effortlessly proletarian than that. The sentiment comes from Republican fundraiser Peter Secchia, our ambassador to Italy, who uttered it at a Republican event before he departed for Rome last summer. Secchia is a modern-day example of the dirt-under-

the-fingernails envoy, a man who would surely have a horror of *finesse* and *chicanery* if he knew what those words meant. And while at the time of his appointment he embodied some qualities shared by a few of his forebears—candor, self-confidence, ignorance of foreign affairs and a truly stunning lack of artifice—his chief, perhaps *only*, qualification for the job, like that of two-thirds of President Bush’s appointees during his first six months in office, was his giving, caring relationship with the Republican Party.

It’s not that appointing friends and party contributors to represent our country abroad is something new. If anything, argues Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute, ambassadorship-for-sale is “a problem that is ages old.” Every president has, with a wave of the presidential seal, turned his share of toadying campaign contributors and friends into princely ambassadors. It’s the sheer number of unqualified ambassadors dispatched recently that rankles.

“I thought that Mr. Bush, be-



C. Howard Wilkins Jr., Pizza Hut and Long John Silver mogul and current ambassador to the Netherlands, consults with an in-country source.

ing an old professional himself, would insist upon having highly qualified people serving as ambassadors,” says Malcolm Toon, a former ambassador to the Soviet Union and a career foreign-service officer who is one of the most candid critics of the spoils system. Toon, a man schooled in diplomatic speech, has politely declined to mention the fact that Bush himself was no professional—just a rich, sycophantic defeated congressman—when Nixon appointed him ambassador to the United Nations. “But many of [Bush’s] choices have been terrible,” he continues. “What we have to insist on is quality and ability rather than on all career ambassadors. These days most of our political appointees are totally undistinguished, people who haven’t even fared well in their own walks of life. That makes us look very silly abroad. In fact, I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say that we’re the laughingstock of the world right now because of the caliber of our ambassadors.”

Laughingstock of the world? Us? Just because we’ve sent Florida shopping-center magnate Melvin Sembler, winner of the National Mall Monitor Centers for Excellence Award, to be our man in Australia? And Italian-speaking Florida real estate developer Joseph Zappala to serve in Spain? And Della Newman to be ambassador to New Zealand, despite her inability in an interview to name New Zealand’s prime minister, or to state her qualifications to be an ambassador, or to envision any diplomatic duties beyond making herself “pleasant to everyone”? Or maybe it’s because of C. Howard Wilkins Jr., who as our new ambassador to the Netherlands posed with a man dressed as a giant green frog for a publicity photo and for whom the State Department submitted the following Certification of Demonstrated Competence, a form meant to zero in on why a nomi-



nee should be approved as ambassador by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

"Mr. Wilkins, 50, is presently Founder and President of Maverick Development Corporation since 1975. The Maverick Development Corp. owns 5 franchises of Long John Silver Restaurants and 44 Pizza Huts and 25 rental stores. In 1981 Mr. Wilkins formed Mav-

erick Restaurant Corp. which operates 22 Grandy's Restaurants....Mr. Wilkins was Vice Chairman of the Board of Pizza Hut, Inc. from 1974 to February 1975. Prior to that Mr. Wilkins was President and Chairman of Pizza Corporation of America, a company that he founded.... From 1966 to 1968 Mr. Wilkins built, owned and operated 13 Pizza Huts in the State of Kentucky and served as president of Pizza Hut of Louisville, Inc."

Oh—the Pizza Hut and Long John Silver mogul. Why didn't you say so?

By virtue of their flimsy qualifications, these men and women—and others, including former senator Chic Hecht of Nevada (who voiced his interest in being ambassador to the Bahamas this way: "I understand it's a nice life-style. I love golf, and they have a lot of nice golf courses")—are off to a good start if they want to carry on the American ambassadorial tradition of unthreatening ignorance and lack of refinement. And having taken office only in the last year, they will have ample time to prove themselves. But the historical competition is stiff. A look at some of their recent predecessors shows exactly how far they'll have to sink to join the pantheon of this country's most embarrassing ambassadors.

**RELIABLE OBSERVATIONS FROM ABROAD**  
*My good friend Mr. Somoza assures me that the so-called Sandinistas are no more bothersome to him than is a tiny gnat perched on the back*

*of the sleek and powerful jaguar....*

Vincent de Roulet, a Republican Party contributor and our ambassador to Jamaica from 1969 to 1973, ranks with the worst of America's ambassadors. He casually referred to Jamaicans as "children" and "idiots" and once, reportedly, as "niggers." On one occasion he proudly told the

### **Vincent de Roulet, a Republican Party contributor**

Senate that he'd

attempted to bribe Socialist candidate Michael Manley during the 1972

national elections with promises that the CIA would not interfere with the elections as long as Manley did not make nationalization of American companies a campaign issue. Upon learning that some members of the Senate were upset by this revelation,

**and former ambassador to Jamaica, referred to Jamaicans**

**as "children" and "idiots" and once,**

**reportedly, as "niggers"**

way. (Maino wasn't completely unquali-

fied—he can spout exquisite ambassadorese. Appearing before the Senate prior to his confirmation, he offered this analysis of the situation in Botswana: "I am under the impression that linkage is not in place. I think as a practical matter we have to accept it being there, but at the moment...South Africa is not insistent on linkage.")

Dicey confirmation hearings rarely disqualify a president's ambassadorial nominee. One candidate, who was approved to become ambassador to what was then Ceylon, did not know the name of the country's prime minister or its capital. But lack of smarts is no impediment. Otherwise, how could Richard Kneip, the former governor of South Dakota, ever have slipped through to become ambassador to Singapore from 1978 to 1980? True, Kneip had

an inquisitive mind: "What is this 'Gang of Four' that everyone is talking about?" he would ask his staff. "Did you say there are two separate Korean governments? How come?" Kneip was also blithe enough in his ignorance to admit hav-

ing never heard of Islam, Gandhi or antihistamines. As Carter's ambassador he was known to spend an average of 21 hours a week in the office, avoided entertaining (in the age of satellite communications and secret missions by the president's national security ad-



De Roulet seemed surprised, explaining that he thought it was "perfectly proper to solicit something from a politician when he's running for office." Before De Roulet was finally declared persona non grata by Manley's government, he further endeared himself to the prime minister by calling him an "emotional yo-yo."

Theodore Maino was another American who apparently thought it perfectly proper to solicit something from a candidate for office. After Reagan was elected in 1980, Maino, a friend of Reagan aide Michael Deaver's, said



Above, John Louis Jr., ambassador to Great Britain, displays the sort of intellectual intensity he brought to the Falklands War; below, Chic Hecht, our man in the Bahamas, attempts to foment a cult of personality.



viser, entertaining is a big part of what ambassadors do) and once dispatched his houseboy to stand in for him at an official reception.

Then there was Reagan's first ambassador to Great Britain, the Johnson Wax heir, John Louis Jr., who didn't bother dispatching anyone to stand in for him while he was vacationing in Florida during the first ten days of the Falklands War, Britain's most dramatic international conflict in a quar-

ter century. But even when Louis was on duty, he spent a good part of his time playing golf with his wife, worrying about how much money he could be making if he were back in the States, and riding around in the customized limousine he'd brought over from home. At the time of Louis's confirmation, Malcolm Toon said that his only qualification for the job was "that he speaks English."

Indeed, speaking English often

seems among the key qualifications for ambassadorships. At a recent confirmation hearing, three nominees, when asked about their foreign-language skills, were able to pass themselves off as linguists simply by answering with the appropriate well-rehearsed response (as in "Do you speak Spanish?" "Si!" "Next!"). In what one must charitably attribute to nervous preconfirmation humor, Melvin Sembler, the current ambassador to Australia, listed his languages simply as "English (fluent)" on his résumé. (In another practical-joke-like maneuver, Sembler and Joseph Zappala, the current ambassador to Spain, handed in almost identical answers to one of the questions on their disclosure forms, forcing Senator Rudy Boschwitz to explain that "their offices are very, very close to one another...") Turner Shelton, the ambassador to Nicaragua in the 1970s, who was known to the populace as *el Sapo Verde* ("the Green Toad") because of his appearance and eating habits, spoke no Spanish and apparently relied heavily on Somoza, the English-speaking dictator, for the substance of his field reports to Washington. Maxwell Rabb, Reagan's ambassador to Italy for eight years, never learned more than a few words of Italian. Still, the language barrier didn't stop Rabb—who was called aloof, out of it, "a bad imitation of an ambassador" by one Italian journalist—from claiming recently that he'd talked the Italians into accepting U.S. nuclear missiles, a decision that the Italians say they'd reached almost two years before Rabb arrived in the country. And Walter Annenberg, Nixon's appointee to Great Britain, was ridiculed by the British for his difficulty not with foreign languages but with his own native tongue. When the queen once asked Annenberg where he was living while the embassy was being redecorated, he responded, "We're in the embassy residence, subject, of course, to some of the discomfiture as a re-

## STATE SECRETS REVEALED!

### Our Ambassadors Are Unqualified and Poorly Trained

*We know that an ambassador's life can be fraught with intrigue: secret rendezvous, sensitive negotiations, sacrosanct pouches full of "Eyes Only" documents—why, just ask Felix Bloch. But the mania for secrecy seemingly extends far beyond the embassy to envelop many details of ambassadorial life. Here are two examples.*

LAST YEAR WHEN THE AMERICAN FOREIGN Service Association, a sort of union for foreign-service employees, tried to see the Certifications of Demonstrated Competence that the State Department submits to the Senate in support of the president's ambassadorial nominees, it discovered that the documents had been classified. AFSA sued to obtain copies of the certificates for their records. The union successfully argued that the reason for classifying the documents was that they were an embarrassment to the administration, and it pointed out that several nominees had cited their campaign contributions as qualifications—a violation of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. It also noted that in several cases the State Department had included in its description of a nominee's qualifications vague references to his or her "loyalty." Furthermore, the papers were riddled with errors; in one case the nominee for ambassador to Guatemala was recommended as an "exceptional candidate for Ambassador to Venezuela."

SECRECY OF A DIFFERENT SORT SURROUNDS the two-week crash course that insurance salesmen turned ambassadors take at the Foreign Service Institute in Rosslyn, Virginia. When SPY called and asked for information on the seminar—what subjects are offered, exactly what advice ambassadorial spouses are given, how much it costs to train each appointee—a spokesperson for the school demanded to see a copy of the magazine, because, as she put it, "It's kind of a strange name for a magazine, don't you agree?" After a copy was dispatched to her, she declined to help: "Your magazine was... interest-

ing, but I don't think you would be interested in our seminar.... No, I'm sorry, but I won't be sending you anything."

Undaunted, we attempted to track down a segment of ABC's *20/20* that focused on the ambassadorial spoils system; part of it had been filmed inside the school. As it turned out, ABC's lawyers had instructed the company that sells clips of the program to withhold that particular broadcast. Although the show aired on primetime network television just a few months ago, no one, it seems, is permitted to see it now. Four calls to *20/20* inquiring as to whether there was anything they could do—such as let us watch the tape in their offices, under supervision—were ignored.

Fortunately, we found a *20/20* enthusiast who lent us his copy of the broadcast. What does it show? In one scene the camera briefly pans across a classroom full of attentive embryonic envoys—jovial, generally heavysset men and women, most of them in their fifties and sixties, all of them dressed in pastel leisurewear. Then the picture switches abruptly to what the narrator says is a lesson in coping with terrorist attacks. The same people are now in a simulated airplane cabin being screamed at by a man with dark, scraggly facial hair, a vaguely Middle Eastern accent and something resembling a fake rifle. "Heads down!" he threatens over and over as the class smiles self-consciously and does what he says. *And that's it!* Apparently somebody doesn't want it known that our ambassadors go through training in how to obey armed terrorists.

—R.U.



sult of a need for, uh, elements of refurbishment and rehabilitation."

#### EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELDS

*I am quite familiar with your problems, having once appeared in a series called Destry, which was set in the Southwest, very near your nation....*

Fluency alone isn't enough to pull an ambassador out of the mire. Forgotten Reagan-level

movie actor John (A Time to Love and a Time to Die, Spartacus, Midnight Lace, Psycho) Gavin was Reagan's ambassador to Mexico from 1981 to 1986 and spoke excellent Spanish—his mother was Mexican—but according to one Mexican official "is still remembered as one of the least capable ambassadors."

Gavin was already known to Mexicans for starring in a Bacardi rum commercial ("Have you tried the test of maturity?") and in the 1978 horror film Jennifer, which was showing in Mexico City when his nomination was announced. When he was confirmed, one Mexican journalist termed the appointment "diplomatic sadism." Another joked that Mexico should in turn send Cantinflas as its representative to the United States. Looking back on the episode, one observer says evenly, "He was considered a good-looking ambassador."

On the job Gavin, who until recently ran the North Cove Yacht Harbor marina for Mexican media tycoon Emilio Azcarraga Milmo, was regarded as blunt and undiplomatic, a man who liked to meddle in Mexico's internal politics. He routinely insulted the Mexican press by saying that it was controlled by the government. And in what struck many as a petty attempt to exercise "reciprocity" in trade between the United States and Mexico, he proposed that Mexican officials in the U.S. use only lower-quality American automobiles, a snip-pety reaction to the dearth of

luxury cars available to American officials in Mexico. Damage to Mexican-American relations was limited only by the fact that he was out of Mexico for almost half of his first 14 months in office.

"People in Mexico look at him with pity now," says a Mexican journalist. Still, if Gavin wasn't image-conscious, his wife, the

**Former senator Chic Hecht of Nevada explained why he wanted to become**

**Bush's ambassador to the Bahamas: "I understand it's a nice**

actress Constance Towers,

was. In accepting a part on CBS's Capitol, her only stipulation was that she play a "good person" role, because she felt a responsibility to Gavin's position as ambassador.

Malcolm Toon said of Gavin at the time, "It is very impor-

**life-style. I love golf, and they**

**have a lot of nice golf courses"**



tant for us to have somebody there who is sensitive to Mexican concerns, but we have a Hollywood actor—and not a very good one at that." The White House's official response to Toon—"We have a former actor in the Oval Office"—was meant to be reassuring.

**THE ELEGANCE OF EMBASSY LIFE**  
*Hiya, Mr. Prime Minister. Didja bring your cleats?*

Mexico isn't the only neighbor we've favored with a colorful, offensive, intrusive ambassador. Paul Robinson, an Illinois insurance man appointed by Reagan as ambassador to Canada in 1981, made himself particularly unpopular in Ottawa by attacking

whatever managed to stick in his craw—Pierre Trudeau's "liberal" government, even Canada's decision to adopt the metric system.

One of Robinson's chief complaints was that Canada spent too much on social services and not enough on weapons. In one speech he upbraided the Canadian press for reporting more

on acid rain and inflation than on the Soviet arms buildup. After the speech John Miller, the then-39-year-old deputy managing edi-

tor of Canada's largest newspaper, The Toronto Star, questioned Robinson's hawkish stance. "Shove off, kid," the ambassador replied. Several years later, when it came time to replace Robinson, even the State Department acknowledged, to Maclean's magazine, that "Ottawa is due another sort of person." That other sort of person turned out to be a career diplomat, Thomas Niles. Soon after his arrival in Canada, Niles went looking for Miller at the Star to apologize.

Robinson and his wife made their mark architecturally by clapping a few plantationesque columns on the Georgian-style embassy. They also brought a unique social flair. According to



one observer, Martha Robinson "swanned around in these strapless southern-belle-type dresses" while her husband tended more toward sitting at home in front of the television set, where he would share a bottle of Scotch with his chauffeur. This was, of course, when he wasn't entertaining guests at embassy parties with the baseball pitching machine he'd had installed in the garden. (At least the



From top: Henry Catto, ambassador to Great Britain, cements an American stereotype; John Gavin, ambassador to Mexico, with local folk dancers; Ambassador Maxwell Robb, waiting for an Italian phrase to come to him



# ALL THE PRESIDENT'S RICH, INFLUENCE-PEDDLING MEN

## What \$100,000 Buys from a Republican Administration



Not every major contributor to George Bush's presidential campaign has been thanked with an opportunity to sit in a foreign embassy and offend the natives. Some, like pint-size loan-default engineer Henry Kravis and soybean magnate Dwayne Andreas, have chosen not to relinquish their day jobs. But make no mistake—virtually every one of the 248 members of Team 100 (as the group of \$100,000-plus contributors to the 1988 Republican campaign is known) expected something for his or her money, and Bush has obliged his benefactors with cushy jobs, honorary posts, purposeful legislative inaction and a proposed capital-gains-tax cut that is an especially heartfelt thank-you note to the team's members. Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute notes that presidents have always "given a lot of credence" to their campaign sugar daddies, but he is disturbed by the "difference in volume" of presidential favoritism this time around. Perhaps the biggest reward went to Bush's petro-buddy from Houston, Robert Mosbacher—Team 100 member and finance chairman of the whole campaign—who was named Commerce secretary. Shortly after Bush's inauguration Mosbacher whined about how little his fellow plutocrats were getting out of the Bush administration. "Quite a high percentage of those who have been helpful," he said, alluding to his Team 100 colleagues in classic fundraiserese, "haven't gotten anything—at least 50 percent."

He should have been more patient. Now, just a little more than a year later, the situation has been rectified.

| TEAM 100 PLAYERS  | WHAT THEY GOT  |
|---|--|
| <b>Rockwell Schnabel</b> , investment banker and Ronald Reagan's ambassador to Finland  | Named under secretary of Commerce for travel and tourism; the post demands no expertise or vexatious decision-making but offers endless opportunities for travel   |
| <b>Michael Galvin</b> , Chicago attorney and Republican fundraiser  | Designated assistant secretary for export administration; his job is as challenging as Schnabel's  |
| <b>William Moss</b> , Dallas oil-and-gas investor   | Chosen to lead several clueless old people as chairman of the pointless President's Drug Advisory Council  |
| <b>Henry Hillman</b> , chairman of The Hillman Corporation  | Nothing for himself, though Hillman's wife, Elsie, a Republican National Committeewoman from Pennsylvania, was named to Moss's drug council  |
| <b>Carl Lindner</b> of the American Financial Corporation   | Invited with his son to attend a state dinner at the White House for the Australian prime minister   |
| <b>Roy Goodman</b> , heir and New York state senator  | Accepted a do-nothing-but-feel-proud seat on the National Council on the Arts, an advisory council to the NEA  |
| <b>Joy A. Silverman</b> , Manhattan socialite, whose husband, Jeffrey, CEO of Ply Gem Industries, was also a member of Team 100                         | Annoyed that she wasn't named ambassador to Luxembourg and humiliated when the Senate refused to confirm her as ambassador to Barbados; her wounds were salved when the president announced plans to nominate her to the board of the Kennedy Center |
| LBO kings <b>Henry Kravis</b> , <b>George Roberts</b> , <b>Theodore Forstmann</b> , <b>Nicholas Forstmann</b> , <b>Brian Little</b> , <b>Raymond G.</b> | Though Democrats denounced the leveraged-buyout craze and called for regulatory legislation, Bush decided to do nothing beyond forcefully monitoring the situation. Along with this group  |

| TEAM 100 PLAYERS   | WHAT THEY GOT  |
|--|--|
| <b>Chambers, Frank E. Richardson</b> , <b>Lewis Eisenberg</b> , <b>Howard Leach</b> and <b>Stephen Schwarzman</b>                            | favor, there were individual benefits: Kravis was honored as the New York GOP's Man of the Year. Less fortunate was Eisenberg, who was a likely candidate for a Washington appointment until he was sued for sexual harassment by a former assistant   |
| Cable conglomerate owners <b>Robert Bass</b> , <b>Alan Gerry</b> , <b>Roy M. Speer</b> and <b>John Waller</b>                                | While many in Congress have called for reregulation of the highly profitable cable industry, Bush contributors rest easy knowing the president prefers to leave things the way they are  |
| <b>Frank Lorenzo</b> , chairman of Texas Air, parent company of Eastern Airlines   | Bush vetoed legislation that would have set up a congressional commission to investigate the yearlong dispute between Eastern's unions and Lorenzo   |
| <b>Dwayne O. Andreas</b> , chairman of the Archer-Daniels-Midland Company, the nation's largest producer of corn- and soybean-based products | Andreas successfully agitated for new import quotas that drove up the prices of domestic crops, and for the maintenance of federal policies that encourage farmers to grow more than they can sell. The resulting excess is a windfall for ethanol producers like Andreas, who has received more than \$28 million worth of corn free from the government. Last June Bush himself was persuaded to endorse the cause of ethanol-based fuel by taking part in a publicity stunt, test-driving a gasohol-powered Chevy on a tractor track in Nebraska. "It had a lot of pickup," Bush enthused |
| <b>William S. Farish</b> , hunting buddy of Bush's   | Farish's springer spaniel, Tug III, was allowed to mate with Millie Bush   |
| —David Kamp and Carter Burden III  |  |



Robinsons made some attempts to fulfill their social obligations while on duty. Henry Catto, the current ambassador to Great Britain, is known mainly for boasting about what a close friend of the president's he is and for seldom entertaining. In the words of one political journalist, "These days, it's a rather universal feeling that the embassy is of no interest whatsoever for journalists or diplomats.")

Once Robinson's service had ended, he apparently had a difficult time persuading his wife to leave. Martha threw the embassy staff into an uproar by refusing to go to the airport, and when the flight could be delayed no longer, her husband left without her. She eventually returned to Illinois to join him, but not before renting an apartment in Ottawa, not far from the American embassy.

**THE DIPLOMAT'S GIFT OF SPEECH**  
*So, like, it's rilly important that we, y'know, have lots of missiles in Europe, okay?*

Some countries have had more than one awful U.S. ambassador, whether by Washington's design or through plain bad luck.

Switzerland is one. "You've hit the jackpot," says an expert on U.S.-Swiss relations when asked to reminisce about envoys *ordinaire*. In fact, Switzerland's luck with regard to U.S. ambassadors has been so bad that not long ago, one Swiss newspaper printed photos of several previous U.S. ambassadors under the headline **THE AMERICANS TAKE US FOR IDIOTS**.

Marvin Warner, Carter's ambassador from 1977 to 1979, was a savings-and-loan tycoon interested in supporting the New York Yankees, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the odd Democrat. He is best known for his post-ambassadorial fiasco, the collapse of the Home State Savings Bank, for which he was found liable to the tune of \$4 billion.

Faith Ryan Whittlesey is a right-wing Republican who twice served as ambassador to Switzerland,

first in 1981 and again in 1985. (In the interregnum she had returned to Washington to be White House director of public liaison. Whittlesey was investigated in 1987 for alleged abuses of an embassy entertainment fund and for her hiring practices. One transgression among many was her firing of a career officer when he re-

**Richard Kneip had an inquisitive mind: "What is this 'Gang of Four' everyone is talking about?" he would ask his staff. "Did you say there**

mininded her that Switzerland was a neutral coun-

try and would not look kindly on her attempts to get Swiss support for the Nicaraguan contras. She also allegedly spent most of an \$82,300 embassy fund entertaining and lodging American officials and prominent conservatives even though the money was meant to be used for entertaining Swiss nationals. Additionally, she was reported to have hired a benefactor's son in return for a \$5,000 contribution to the embassy. No action was taken against Whittlesey, but in 1987, as a result of the Whittlesey investigation, the State Department barred all embassies from accepting private donations.

Whittlesey's replacement, Philip Winn, had worked for Reagan at HUD and then stepped out to join Winn & Associates, a company he formed with several other former HUD officials. When the HUD scandal broke, he was found to have profited grandly from his past associations. Winn, who was ambassador at the time of the investigation, soon came home, having served for little more than a year.

Currently our man in Switzerland is Joseph Gildenhorn, whose only obvious qualification for the post was his willingness to support George Bush and the GOP with \$230,000 in campaign contributions. He speaks none of the three official languages of Switzerland (French, German, Italian) and was rated unqualified for the

job by the American Academy of Diplomacy, a nonpartisan organization of former ambassadors. The Swiss government may take some solace in the fact that he appears, unlike some of his predecessors, not to be knee-deep in sleaze — so far.

Beautiful Alpine nations seem unusually hard hit, American-am-

bassador-wise. When Helene von Damm rose to prominence as Reagan's per-

sonal secretary, the Austrian press displayed a fair amount of national pride over the fact that an Austrian émigré had achieved such success. But when Von Damm returned to her native land as the U.S. ambassador to Vienna, the reaction was quite different. Few members of the establishment

took her seriously. Von Damm had been born in a rural Austrian village, emigrating when she was 17. Consequently her fluent German (her main qualification for the post) was the fluent German of a provincial teenager, the Austrian equivalent of Valley-speak. And her public behavior was in keeping with her provincialism. Her activities were

**How come?"**



A trio of Swiss misses: clockwise, Ambassadors Marvin Warner, Philip Winn and Faith Ryan Whittlesey

chronicled extensively in Vienna's society and gossip pages, rarely in the same detail in the political news. To the dismay of her embassy staff, she allowed herself to be



photographed wearing a dirndl, and even her honeymoon with her new husband, the owner of Vienna's Sacher Hotel, was chronicled in the city's gossip pages. (It was her liaison with this hotelier—now her fourth ex-husband—that had the embassy staff referring to her as the "Sacher tart" and that eventually led to her recall.)

But if she wasn't taken seriously, at least Von Damm was relatively energetic and well liked. Ronald Lauder, her successor, was evidently neither. "Lauder's press people were always leading him around," says one Austrian journalist, "because they knew that they couldn't risk some Austrian asking him about Waldheim or something. In order to avoid saying, 'I don't know, I have to check,' he would just say anything and then have to be corrected by his embassy people."

Austrian journalists devised a kind of game they would play with Lauder. "It was called Waldheim Discussion," says one of them. "It was a time in Austria when even someone who had been there a few days could tell which arguments were used in favor of Waldheim and which were used against him. But Lauder couldn't seem to distinguish. He would mess it up and treat anti-Waldheim people in a sharp and rather hostile way and indulge in friendly discussions with obviously pro-Waldheim people. He just didn't realize."

Lauder was known to travel with a squad of six to nine bodyguards, apparently at the urging of his mother. "I remember one winter evening in Vienna," says an Austrian political observer. "As I watched from the sidewalk, three cars stopped in the street. From the first and third cars, there jumped three people from each car, with their hands inside their jackets. And they looked around as if they were starring in an old gangster movie. As soon as they were sure nothing was dangerous in the street, they gave a sign, and Ronald Lauder and another guard got out of the second car and

walked into a restaurant. That made a negative impact here, because even the highest Austrian officials walk around freely, yet the American ambassador feels he needs eight bodyguards."

The record for indulging American dodoes, though, belongs not to Austria but to Australia.

## Helene von Damm's fluent German, her main qualification for appointment,

Melvin Sembler

was recommended for his post by Senator Rudy Boschwitz with this ringing endorsement: "This is the man who was not only the president of the National Council of Shopping Centers, but the *Interna-*

was the fluent German of a provincial teenager—

the Austrian equivalent

of Valley-speak

press, and she was often there-

after referred to as Madam Rice. Marshall Green, the only serious diplomat in recent memory to be sent to Australia, was well regarded, even though his wife had a tendency to bring her knitting to important diplomatic dinners. When he left, Reagan appointed California Cadillac dealer Robert Nesen, a man whose main qualification besides giving money to the Republican Party was that he owned a ranch next to the Reagans', near Santa Barbara.

The bright side of all this is that after a while, if a country sees enough bozos inhabiting the American embassy, it lowers its expectations accordingly. That, at least, is what Australia seems to have done. Noting the bowls of peanuts that decorated the embassy under Carter's ambassador, and the ambassador's wife who invited her female guests up to the embassy ladies' room because it was the

only room she felt comfortable in, a Canberra society writer was benevolent. "You go to the British High Commission and, you know, there's the butler and it's all done in perfect

taste," he wrote. "But you go to the American embassy and the American ambassadors always have their own idea of something, which kind of strikes a jarring note but is pleasantly human. I think they give us a laugh."

And what more can one ask of international diplomacy? ☛



Above, Ed Clark, LBJ's man in Australia, with bulbs on his lapel and nose; below, Envoys ahoy! Helene von Damm, ambassador to Austria, in a jaunty nautical motif





Photography: Tiziana

# ESPIRIT



# "PUT YOUR COAT BACK ON, BARBARA..."

People in Washington may hail bipartisanship, but what they really like to do is flay one another with generous lashings of vitriol. Although these imbroglíos, as Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute points out, tend ultimately to affect an individual's fortunes and not government policy, they do give the city a sense of drama. **Bill Thomas** examines the best feuds in town.

## WE'RE LEAVING!"

**Washington's Feuds in a Nutshell**



Tipper Gore vs. Kandy Stroud

Will was a favorite of the Reagans', prepping the candidate for his debate with Jimmy Carter in 1980 and later crying on the first lady's shoulder in restaurants when he suffered marital problems. He is now out in the cold, forever on Bush's bad side after calling him a lap-dog in 1986.

Gore founded the Parents' Music Resource Center, the group opposed to dirty rock lyrics. Stroud, a former journalist, wanted to be part of the group's inner circle. Although the two claim they were friends and never feuded, observers recall a magazine photo shoot Stroud crashed. Gore objected, and Stroud stalked off.



George Bush vs. George Will



John McLaughlin

vs. Robert Novak

In 1988 McLaughlin analyzed one of his programs and concluded that panelist Novak was hogging too much time. Later, during a taping, Novak said McLaughlin was soft on Noriega. A fight nearly erupted, and Novak was not invited back. Since then Novak has spread the word that McLaughlin, a notorious tightwad, resolved a sexual-harassment suit filed against him by settling out of court for a rumored \$350,000.



Christopher Hitchens





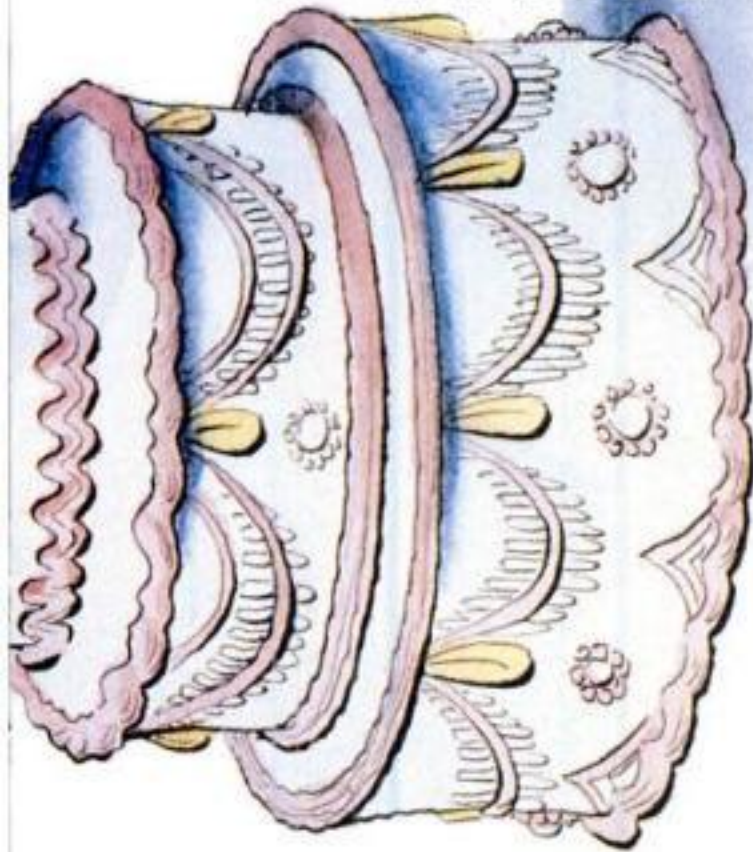
Bush and Dole never liked each other, but the 1988 presidential race poisoned matters permanently. Senator Dole fruitlessly harped on the "wimp factor"; Bush later took his revenge by appointing Dole's more successful wife, Elizabeth, secretary of Labor, thus relegating Dole to the role of Cabinet spouse at all official functions.



William Bennett vs. Richard Darman

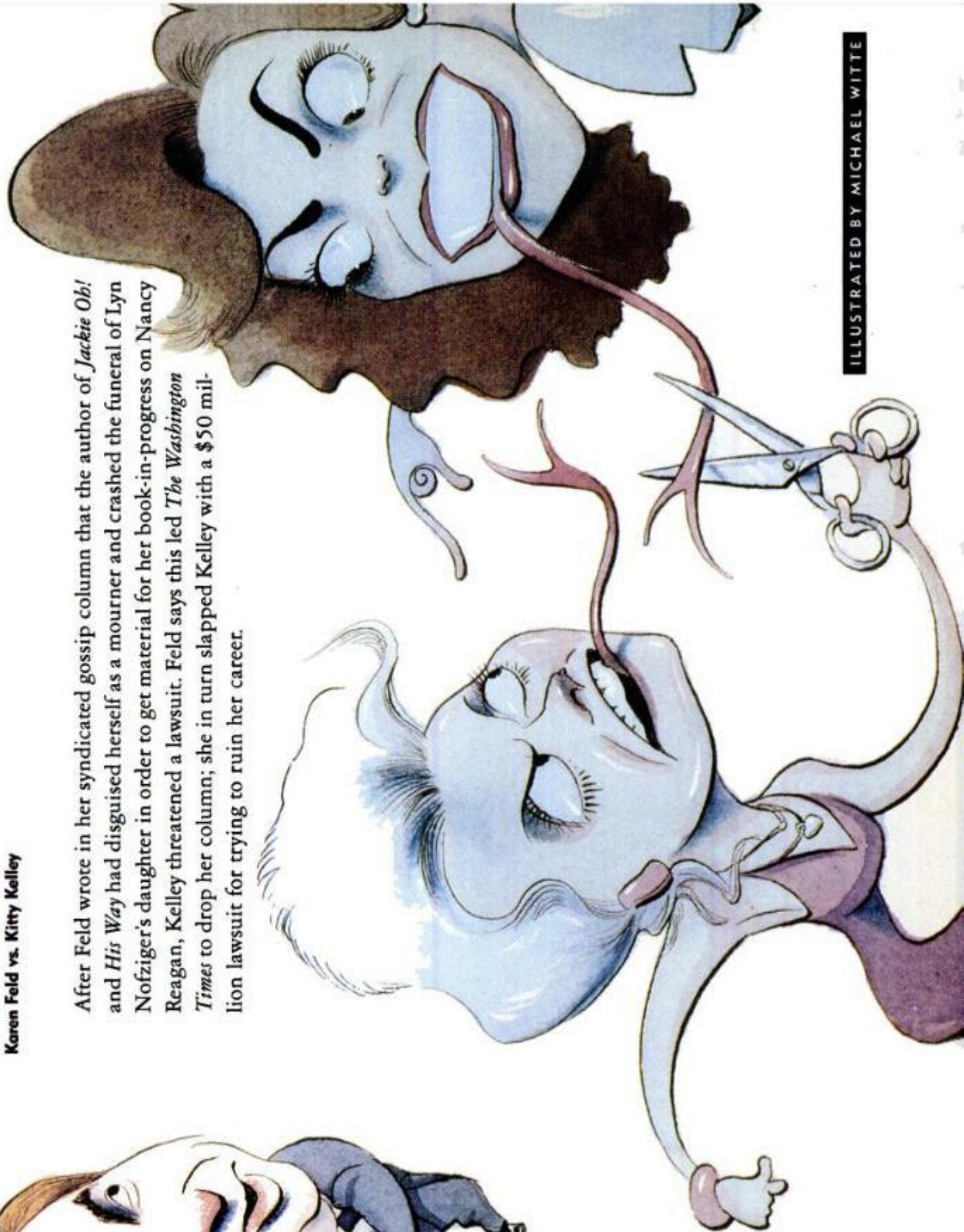
Earlier this year the drug czar lobbied the budget director for a 30 percent increase in the antidrug budget. The professionally stingy Darman offered a 12 percent increase and refused to budge. "Fuck you, Dick," Bennett screamed. "Fuck you, Bill," Darman replied. The two spent five minutes insulting each other's masculinity and now won't make eye contact at Cabinet meetings.

The banty journalist and *The New Republic's* publisher became archenemies after a series of heated disagreements on Middle Eastern issues. Though he's been kept out of *TNR's* pages, Hitchens did manage to crash the magazine's gala 75th-anniversary party and ingest lots of free food.



Karen Feld vs. Kitty Kelley

After Feld wrote in her syndicated gossip column that the author of *Jackie Oh!* and *His Way* had disguised herself as a mourner and crashed the funeral of Lyn Nofziger's daughter in order to get material for her book-in-progress on Nancy Reagan, Kelley threatened a lawsuit. Feld says this led *The Washington Times* to drop her column; she in turn slapped Kelley with a \$50 million lawsuit for trying to ruin her career.





Marty Russo vs. Dennis Eckart



One night while Representative Russo was making an impassioned speech about the Baltic states, House colleagues, spearheaded by Eckart, began chanting "Gep-hardt, Gep-hardt" as a signal to the majority leader to conclude debate. The hot-tempered Russo left the podium, seized Eckart by the collar and spewed, "For a little shit, you've got a big fucking mouth." Russo had to be restrained, and he apologized the next day, but Eckart is still steaming.

Jesse Jackson vs. Marion Barry



The De Borchgrave-edited *Washington Times* regularly attacks the Graham-published *Washington Post*. But Graham's spite goes back to 1963, when, De Borchgrave claims, Graham suspected him of encouraging an affair between her husband and a young reporter. However, De Borchgrave really crossed the line when he offered Graham's daughter, Lally Weymouth, a job as a correspondent-at-large.



Arnaud de Borchgrave vs. Katharine Graham



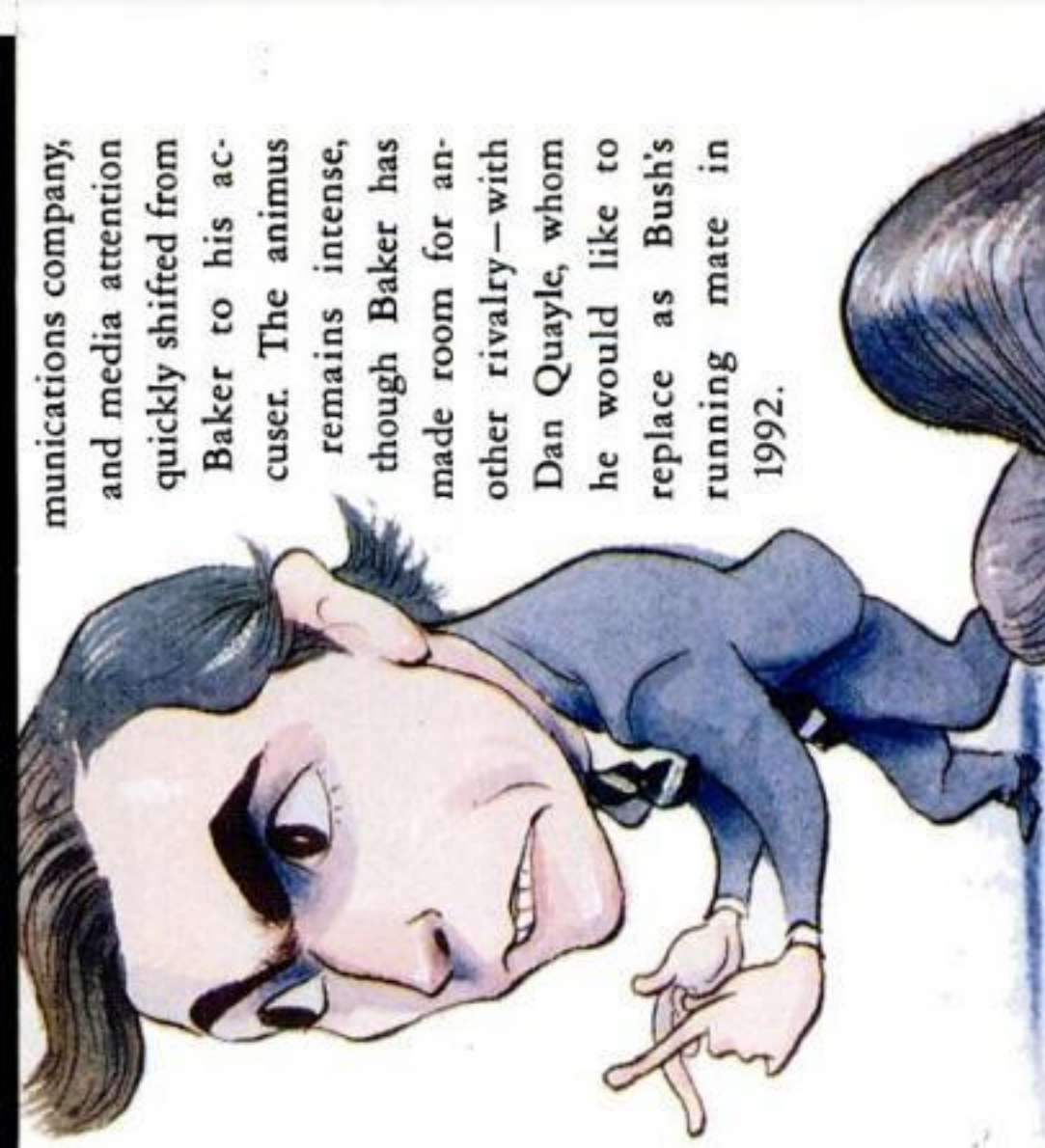
Last year Gray, the White House counsel, told a reporter that the contents of Baker's stock portfolio could affect U.S. policy on Third World debt. Baker's finesse in handling the press enabled him to skirt conflict-of-interest questions. Days later it was *somehow* revealed that Gray was still acting chair-



This feud began when Jackson moved to town last year. After Barry was arrested for possession of crack, Jackson addressed the citizens of his adopted city, saying, "There must be no recess from the due process." Asked what he thought about Jackson's running for mayor, Barry said, "Jesse don't want to run nothing but his mouth." Barry claimed he was misquoted, but Jackson found out that the remark was on tape.



C. Boyden Gray vs. James Baker



Susan Cooke vs. Marlen Ramallo Chalmers

Susan Martin was pregnant when she married Washington Redskins owner Jack Kent Cooke in 1987. When she refused to have an abortion—as she had allegedly agreed to do—Cooke kicked the former cocaine addict off his Virginia estate and started dating her best friend, Marlen Chalmers. Now Susan is suing Marlen for the return of \$5,000 she lent her for cosmetic surgery. ■

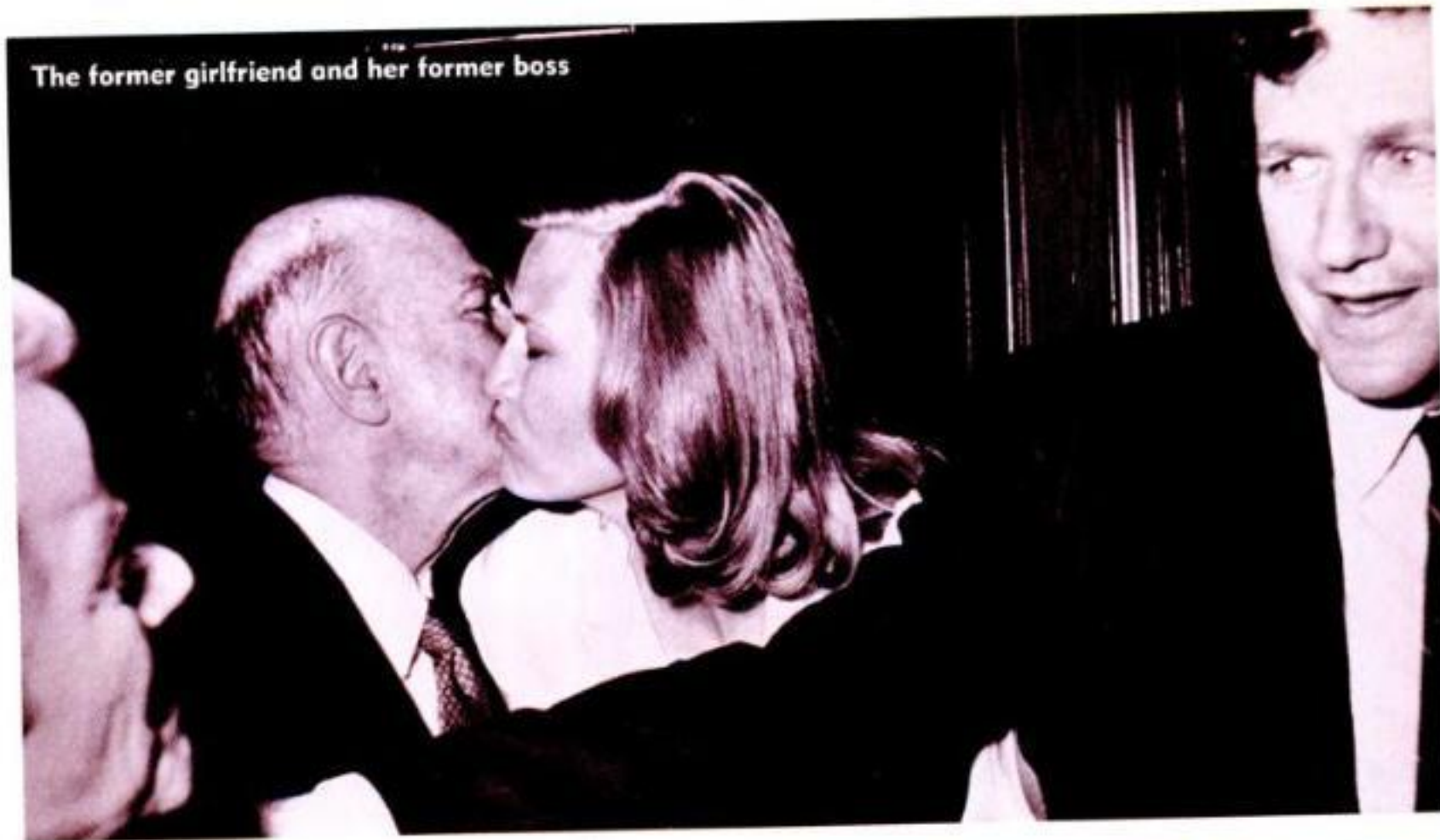




The former boss



The Harrimans



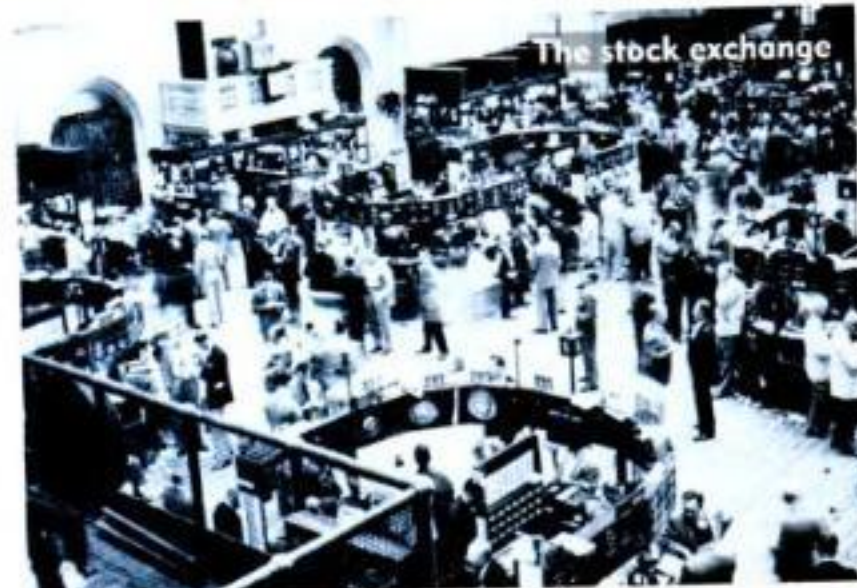
The former girlfriend and her former boss



The pundit



The peace talks




The stock exchange



by *Nicholas von Hoffman* A friend to the famous, an adviser to the powerful, an escort to the famous and powerful and beautiful—flexible Democrat Richard Holbrooke is the prototypical New Age political power networker. You know him, faintly, as a former high-ranking State Department official. You know him better as an on-air pundit for TV shows such as *Nightline*. You know him best, perhaps, as Diane Sawyer's former boyfriend—the one who made Sawyer seem serious while she made him seem glamorous. But if Holbrooke has his way, you will know him someday as national security adviser—or as some other high-profile, really influential, nonelected big shot. For his is a tale of subtle self-promotion, of casual yet relentless power-seeking—a story, that is, of

# BLAND AMBITION

 Richard Holbrooke didn't want to be interviewed. His friends told him not to sit down with SPY. He could see no reason for our interest in him. After all, he had left Washington some years ago to become a managing director of Shearson Lehman Hutton, the Wall Street investment bank. His time as assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs had ended along with Jimmy Carter's presidency. He wasn't a

## Washington Careers 101: Introducing the Wunderkind Who Would Be Kissinger

Washington person anymore, SPY was not to be trusted (his sentiment), and he, Richard Holbrooke, was out of government, out of politics and switched off that career track, a man who didn't go to Democratic Party fundraisers, who in fact never went to the capital city anymore except for regular visits to see Clark Clifford, the ancient, spidery wizard of Washington manipulation whose autobiography Holbrooke was ghostwriting.

"I like Washington, but it's not a healthy place to live for people out of the



government—at least not for me,” Holbrooke explained when first contacted for this story. He was positive he had climbed up out of the Potomac swim, unless it was to redip a toe at one of those parties at Ben Bradlee and Sally Quinn’s—but they were old friends, not really two people in a high and helpful place. He could not repeat it often enough: it was pointless to do a piece on him or his career or the possibility that he might be back in Foggy Bottom one day, this time at the top, as secretary of State or national security adviser in the White House, where he had first served as a young foreign-service officer in Lyndon Johnson’s time. No, he insisted, there was no purpose in doing a sketch of him unless it was *SPY*, the serial killer of magazine journalism, out with its tomahawk again, hacking at fair names and good reputations.

The minutes on the telephone became hours as Holbrooke dissected the pros and cons of being interviewed. To be told that one was to be featured in *SPY*, he thought, was worse news than an IRS audit. Looking back over his 49 years, he could see nothing he had done to merit being put in the stocks, unless it was that his house in Connecticut stood in somewhat unlucky proximity to that of one of the magazine’s editors.

**“There was only one time I ever leaked anything to Evans and Novak,”**

In the end Holbrooke succumbed because, regardless of how you see him—as a journalist manqué, as a news groupie or as an inordinately high-profile Washington fringe professional—he seems to find tape recorder or camera irresistible. Even back in high school in Scarsdale, New York (when he said his role models were Albert Einstein and Enrico Fermi), he worked on the school paper, as he did later at Brown. In the early 1970s, definitely a Washingtonian mobiling upward, he was managing editor of a publication called *Foreign Policy*. In the capital’s perfervid atmosphere of the 1970s a friend of Holbrooke’s called it “a magazine for young war criminals,” by which was probably meant a magazine for young, a-tad-too-ambitious careerists.

Be that as it may, journalism has always been some kind of elixir for Richard Holbrooke. When he got out of college, he wrote to James Reston, then Washington bureau chief of *The New York Times*, for a job. It was only after he was turned down that he took the foreign-service exam, scoring so well that he was sent to school to learn Vietnamese and then shipped across the Pacific. He seems to have loved hanging out with the hacks then as now—three of his best buddies are Leslie Gelb of *The New York Times*, NBC’s Tom Brokaw and *Daily News* publisher Jim Hoge. Lesley Stahl, a Washington hack of distinction who thinks the world of him, is forever trying to find him a nice girl to settle down with. The women he’s found on his own have, for

some reason, tended to be prominent media ladies. His first wife was a booker on the *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*. According to a source at PBS, she used to help him score coups and get credit—the way they keep score in Washington—by putting his pals on the air to be interviewed as experts. He has dated many well-known media figures, and his most famous was Diane Sawyer, in whose career at CBS he took an extraordinarily active interest. More recently, since that went kaput, Holbrooke has been dating Sarah Giles, an editor at *Vanity Fair*.

It was fitting that Dan Rather was sitting across the breakfast room at the Carlyle hotel when the much-negotiated interview finally took place. The more hacks, the better—though Holbrooke, perhaps because of his Diane Sawyer days at CBS, manifests a gentle disdain for the network’s anchorman. The process for determining whether, when, where and how the interview would happen was not unlike the preparations for the Vietnam peace talks in Holbrooke’s foreign-service period: they could

never get started because the participants couldn’t agree on the shape of the table they were to sit at. In like manner, Holbrooke’s decision to grant an interview was followed by a discussion of where it might take place. Holbrooke’s Upper East Side apartment was a possibility, but only if the interviewer would pledge himself not to make note of the clutter. One got the impression from Holbrooke’s qualms about letting the press see his apartment that he and his 25-year-old son were living like two happy Oscar Madisons in bachelor heaven.

To interview Richard Holbrooke is to learn the etiquette of media-government relations as they are observed in Washington. Some statements are on background, some are not for attribution. Some are on deep background, others are on deeper or even deepest background, and a few are uttered on a swallow-and-forget basis. Some statements are in the foreground but with a few names and phrases plucked out here and there. In this instance the interviewee imposed retro-instructions on his words, telephoning from a moving train to make sure that certain things weren’t imputed to him, even indirectly. The workaday hack trying to put together a profile of Holbrooke is like a tailor stitching together a coat out of a bolt of material from which stars, circles and blocks have been scissored out.

Holbrooke is the practitioner of an art perfected by others. Putting on restrictions of this kind goes



back at least 50 years in Washington, to Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was a master at managing the media by imposing rules on the use of his words. The rules can get so complicated that nobody can keep them straight, but it does permit the interviewee to do some wonderfully Byzantine anonymous bushwhacking of his enemies. A source intimately familiar with Blythe and Richard Holbrooke's marriage—the two were divorced in the late 1970s—recalls him as an accomplished player of the press and floater of the trial balloon, a man who knew where to puncture the pipe to dribble a leak: "He even leaked their divorce... on Page Six [of the *New York Post*]. The first she read about it was in the papers."

Holbrooke insists he has led a leakless, hermetically sealed life, but Hodding Carter III, who was State Department spokesman during Holbrooke's tenure in office, says otherwise: "Dick Holbrooke would rather always play it through the side door and shoot from ambush than take anything or anyone head-on." The monkeys in the media zoo on whom Carter believes Richard Holbrooke lavished most of his peanuts were the right-wing columnists Roland Evans and Robert Novak.

This is all stoutly denied by Holbrooke, who says,

## Holbrooke says. "It was a self-preservation situation"

"There was only one time I ever leaked anything to Evans and Novak, and it was a self-preservation situation." We are in dark and turbid waters here, in the midst of a tale difficult to tell because Holbrooke has classified, for personal or career reasons, some of the details.

Suffice it to say that the "self-preservation situation" did not involve the enemies of the United States but a certain Z, a most powerful man in the Carter administration, who was out to eviscerate Richard Holbrooke. As Holbrooke tells the story, Z seized on a Vietnam News Agency transmission that contained a false story about Holbrooke, a piece of "KGB disinformation." It is unclear whether Holbrooke believes Z got the Russians to enlist their Vietnamese Communist allies—we are pre-*perestroika* here—to join in the plot to get him, but however that came down, Holbrooke says Z tried to use this transmission to discredit him and drive him from the government.

Holbrooke's counterploy was to get the CIA to make a study of the transmission—your tax dollars at work—and this study was given to Evans and Novak. "Leak is too weak a word for it—I gave it to them.... It was a very minor game, but it shut Z up."

"It was all turf battles," a close friend of Holbrooke's remembers. When the battles are fought at this level of the political bureaucracy, the combatants' career strategies become intertwined with the strategies of war and peace, poverty and prosperity. Thus, what Holbrooke did in the

Philippines as the most important person shaping American policy there is still a subject of disagreement. At the time, Ferdinand Marcos was in power; Benigno Aquino, Corazon's husband, later to be murdered by Marcos's henchmen, was still in one of his jails; and the Pentagon was pressing to renew the leases on Clark Field and the Subic Bay naval base, among the largest American military installations in the world. The question at the time was whether the United States should put pressure on the dictator to lighten up, or ignore the thumbscrews and cattle prods and just get the leases signed. Pushing for pressure on Marcos was Patt Derian, the assistant secretary of State for human rights and humanitarian affairs, who was later to marry Hodding Carter III.

What divided Holbrooke from Derian as he saw it was that "Patt decided that the assistant secretary for human rights job would be her lever to run policy, all policy—which meant a highly interventionist, highly moralistic approach to all foreign policy, particularly toward right-wing governments."

What divided them was in fact quite different, in the eyes of Stephen Cohen, Derian's deputy secretary, now at Georgetown University Law School. To him Holbrooke was "basically a conservative Democrat,

basically very ambitious, a smooth, charming person.... He knew about the corruption, knew about the human-rights abuses, but miscalculated his realpolitik.... He didn't look at these questions seriously, because any action might have hurt his career. Now he's trying to rewrite



history." He does, however, give Holbrooke credit for putting a half nelson on Marcos to get Benigno Aquino out of jail, but that's where he stopped, in Cohen's opinion. For her part Patt Derian says, "I don't talk about unpleasant subjects."

Some people hear the howls from the dungeons more sharply than others. Holbrooke cares about

An American Careerist in Paris: Assistant Secretary of State Holbrooke primping outside the Vietnamese embassy



human rights, but he balances it off against other things he cares about. Blythe Holbrooke found the Marcoses too much to take. During one of her husband's official Philippine sojourns, she had to go on an Imelda Marcos-guided tour of all the merchandise confiscated from political opponents. She also attended a party on the Marcoses' yacht, which was guarded by frogmen with machine guns. It was too much for her, apparently, and she fled to the American embassy.

There are no frogmen jumping out of Richard Holbrooke's memory. For him, "this is the bureaucratic politics of anyone's career. It happens to have been played out against a historically important issue like Marcos, but it could as well be a war for position at the investment bank where I now work or a political struggle inside *The Washington Post* over who's going to succeed Ben [Bradlee]."

Stephen Cohen used the word *ambitious* to describe Holbrooke. A close acquaintance says of him that he's an example not of "blind ambition, but shameless ambition." His friend and former business partner Jim Johnson slyly says, "He's unbelievably highly motivated, that's indisputable." The son of immigrant parents, his father a doctor, Richard Holbrooke comes from the kind of American background where ambition is learned early. But *ambition* is one of those good/bad words. If you lack it, you are shiftless, yet if you have it, they may call you shift. People admire drive in a person unless they think they see him driving over someone else. The trick, of course, is to be smooth enough to have your ambitions but keep them hidden, and Holbrooke—a man who has pulled off such tricky balancing acts as writing essays for both *Time* and *Newsweek* in the last few years—has not learned how to do this.

**T**he goal of Holbrooke's ambition, even though he's now on Wall Street, is political power, if the judgment of several of the important women in his life is to be accepted. Money is nice, but apparently it isn't Richard Holbrooke's particular aphrodisiac. Complicating his plans, however, is the fact that the road upward in foreign affairs is difficult to chart, especially for Democrats in a Republican age. Time was when the best way to become secretary of State was to be able to carry Tennessee, as Cordell Hull, Franklin D.

a staff man or an operative, but he has no base in the electorate. Henry Kissinger made it to the top by being the Rockefeller family's tame slave. Cyrus Vance, Jimmy Carter's man, rose to his position through years of working the nets of liberal foreign policy, and only when the roof was caving in on Jimmy Crack Corn did Carter turn to a pro, a pol: Maine's Senator Edmund Muskie.

Holbrooke once went out to Wisconsin to spend a couple of days campaigning with Congressman Les Aspin, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, just to see what it was like, but that's as near the voters as he has ever got. Circumstances saw to it that Holbrooke was going to pick his path to the top the new way, not by building power on the hustings. The moment he passed the foreign-service exam he was trapped in the career strategies open to the staff man.

Not that Holbrooke has never had contact with everyday people. He has. He had contact as a young foreign-service officer in the Mekong Delta, riding around in a Jeep, trying, literally, not to shoot himself in the foot as he played his small part in the civilian end of the rural "pacification" program. Arriving there in 1963 was a career-making break; three years later, only in his mid-twenties, he was one of the most knowledgeable Americans in his field, an attribute that got him a staff job in the White House. From there, former governor of New York Averell Harriman took him to the Paris peace talks in 1968. Had they been successful, the Democrat, Hubert Humphrey, would probably have been elected president that year. "We were driven by a November 5, 1968, date. Harriman and Vance were deeply committed to helping Humphrey win and to settling the war," Holbrooke recalls. He saw foreign-policy staff people struggling for place as well as policy, saw some of them sabotage the peace talks and cause Humphrey to lose by a hair. Whether or not the interpretation is correct, here were role models quite different from Einstein and Fermi.

Whether he took the political lessons to heart depends on whom you talk to. After the Republicans came in, Holbrooke got one of those mid-career cool-down fellowships at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson center. The writer and historian Taylor Branch speaks of meeting him there and recalls him as "somebody who was a political character in transition. He was shockingly transparent in adapting his career to the realities. He didn't want to go down with the hawks."

## **Imelda Marcos gave Blythe Holbrooke a guided tour of all the merchandise**

Roosevelt's secretary of State, was able to do. Big powers in the party, men with a following in domestic politics, used to be the ones who were most likely to get that job—William Seward in the Lincoln Cabinet, William Jennings Bryan in Woodrow Wilson's. The incumbent, Jim Baker, might be called

Democratic hawks were in career trouble, so Branch thinks that Holbrooke got himself assigned Peace Corps director in Morocco because "it was a slightly dovish haven" where he could rehabilitate himself. Needless to say, Holbrooke ascribes somewhat less calculating motives to his getting



himself reassigned. Regardless, Branch remembers the Holbrooke of the Princeton year favorably, as someone who was disarming and, unlike many careerists, quite generous with his contacts, introducing people to his number one political rabbi, Averell Harriman.

Kissinger glommed onto Nelson Rockefeller when Rocky was in full flight upward. Harriman was not so good a catch. Harriman is the only governor of New York in the last 50 years to have been defeated running for reelection, a distinction that came to him because he was so stingy, grouchy and arrogant. Beaten by Rockefeller, Harriman went back to Washington to resume a Democratic diplomatic career that extended back to the New Deal. By the time Holbrooke got to Harriman, the word was out on the aging "Governor," as he insisted on being called, but an intimate of everyone involved says Holbrooke worked him for all the old boy was worth in influence and good offices. "Blythe and Richard spent every weekend of their married life with that 80-year-old man," the source says. Much of the Holbrookes' Florida honeymoon was spent with the Harrimans or with Blythe's new husband working the phones to get himself into the Carter administration.

Holbrooke says it was nothing like that. His view of how he got the assistant secretaryship at age 35 is that he picked Carter early and volunteered to help in the foreign-policy part of the 1976 campaign, and afterward Carter gave him a job. Either way, the ambitious must hunt and peck for their chances. To a family friend it seemed that Holbrooke was working men like Clark Clifford (special counsel to Harry Truman; secretary of Defense under Lyndon Johnson) in order to "get their Rolodex." But where there is no regular, codified ladder of ascent, how else to rise? Get Clifford's Rolodex, or be of service to the Harrimans. "They used each other so efficiently," says the friend—the Harrimans provided the grandeur and Richard provided the guest lists at a time when Averell was considered passé and Pamela, his third wife, was thought to be an interloper who'd vamped the aged plutocrat and brought him to the altar. Since Averell's death in 1986, Holbrooke has continued to serve Pamela as an adviser and confidant.

However Holbrooke got his secretaryship, he clearly loved the job. According to an associate from that time, the world sparkled for him; the fasces of power, jets and limos were his to order up; the

## confiscated from the Marcoses'

countries he was responsible for were his "casinos." Once, he reportedly told his wife, "You're unhappy, but these are the best days of my life!" The best days ended, the Reagan people came in, and Holbrooke was out on the street with no money and few prospects; so he teamed up with Jim Johnson and

started a consulting firm, and together they began casting about for clients.

In 1984 Johnson went off to be Walter Mondale's campaign manager, and if that had worked, Richard Holbrooke would have been back at least twice as big. In 1988 Holbrooke took a flier on Al Gore's botched pass at the Democratic nomination, and had that one worked, he would have been an even bigger winner.

Holbrooke still pops up on the network news



shows, supplying sound bites about foreign policy. But now he's on Wall Street, and under the terms of clause 5, paragraph 3C of the interview agreement, nothing Holbrooke may or may not have said about his firm may be printed, though he did say something about himself in his new life: "You can say the following things—very, very few people have ever made the transition from Washington to Wall Street. I went down there to learn the business. I do deals—I don't just open doors; I'm not just a door opener like certain unnamed people at other firms. I've learned the business. I'm not technically proficient, because I didn't go to business school, but I have learned the business.... I came into the business not even knowing what a leveraged buyout was.... I was trying to learn the difference between a debt and equity, and it turned out that there was none. I was trying to learn what a convertible debenture was. I had never done one of those deals you would object to."

When the interviewer says he has heard that Holbrooke is now a multimillionaire, he smiles and doesn't deny it.

He's still driving himself, though, going down to Washington all the time to talk to Clark Clifford, going back to Connecticut to spend his weekends writing, going to the fancy parties, working the nets, thinking how to play the interviews, poised on his web, on the watch for the fat fly named Main Chance. 3

**The Way They Were:** Diane Sawyer stands by her man (and Svengali) as he makes an informal policy statement.





# Capitol Hill

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# MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON AND FONDLES ANYTHING THAT MOVES

Is Congress the Plato's Retreat

of Washington? Yes—but Washington is the Salt Lake City

of the Eastern Seaboard. Confused?

Charlotte Hays and Charlotte Low Allen explain how and where our nation's

leaders do it, and why

everybody else in Washington doesn't

**W**ell, yes, it's true: 87-year-old Strom Thurmond's nickname is Senator Sperm Thurmond. And yes, when the names of legislators such as Wilbur Mills, Wayne Hays, Gary Hart and Buz Lukens come to mind, they do so with a distinctly wicked cast. But a few old goats and a handful of young lechers do not a Sodom make. ⚡ Forget what you've read about sin and sex in Washington, because there isn't any—or at least not much. What there is will be detailed below. ⚡ Meanwhile, consider the unlikely twosome generally considered to be Washington's foremost male sex symbols: conservative pundit George Will and



neoliberal *Crossfire* cohost Michael Kinsley. Both men are said to exude an appealing sort of earnest, bespectacled masculinity. But Kinsley, for one, downplays his own alleged appeal. "I don't know anything about sex in Washington," he avers modestly, and we have been unable to find anyone who contradicts him. Will, an apostle of Edwardian manners, manages to keep the city guessing about his dating game: he has been linked with, among others, Lally Weymouth, the daughter of Katharine Graham. His current affair with Mari Maseng, a Valkyrian Republican who directed Elizabeth Dole's public-affairs staff at the Department of Transportation, has created a semi-stir. But what does the choice of Will as a sex symbol tell us about our capital and its inhabitants? He is, after all, famous for being persnickety and for wearing

## THE CAPITOL ITSELF SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED FOR FURTIVE, ILLICIT SEX. THERE ARE LITTLE CUBBYHOLES, ROOMS SCARCELY BIGGER THAN BROOM CLOSETS, MOSTLY OFF-LIMITS TO ALL BUT SENATORS

bow ties—hardly the sort to trigger vasocongestion in Billings, Montana. Or even Brookline, Massachusetts.

"Washington is a sexless city," explains a well-known journalist who lives there anyway. "One of the reasons *Broadcast News* is such a brilliant depiction of Washington life is that it's a love story in which nobody goes to bed with anybody."

Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute explains, "This city has great difficulty dealing with any issue of sex or glamour in the sense that it involves something other than power or politics." Indeed, Washingtonians would have you believe they're just too tired for sex, too worn out from their very serious, very important jobs governing and instructing America. "You have to work hard here," rationalizes *The Washingtonian's* gossip columnist, Rudy Maxa. "You've got to read two papers and watch the Sunday talk shows. There goes sex before brunch. Then you've got to watch the evening news. There goes sex before dinner. And then you've got to watch Ted Koppel. So there goes sex at night. Something's got to go, and in Washington it's sex." Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing, the National Zoo pandas whose hapless procreative activities are minutely reported in the media, are the only Washingtonian couple of any note, it seems, with time enough to couple. But alas, their names have become synonymous with dysfunction.

Washingtonians would like you to believe that the act of running America is a neat sexual substitute. Mary Matalin, chief of staff of the Republican National Committee, gave a

revealing quote to *Cosmopolitan*. "Power," she said, "the feeling of victory and defeat, it all has a potent, sensual attraction. Winning a race in a state is like no other feeling. It becomes your entire world, your family, friends. It's an obsession, an aphrodisiac," she added, misquoting (or cribbing from) the man who reigned as Washington's premier hunk during the 1970s—Henry Kissinger.

Washington—a strange, unsexy city, to be sure. But a truly sexless city?

"People are still talking about Wilbur Mills," sighs journalist Tim Noah, referring to the 16-year-old incident that found the bulbous, politically powerful congressman from Arkansas traipsing on the banks of the tidal basin with a stripper and a masseuse, an incident Washingtonians frequently cite when trying to convince visitors that the city's residents aren't entirely without normal human desire. Indeed, Washington's fairly regular sex scandals lead one to believe that yes, the city does have a faint libido, and that it is exactly the sort of libido one might find on display at a Shriners' convention.

WASHINGTON, OF COURSE, IS ACTUALLY TWO CITIES. And to be fair, one must give municipal Washington its due: Marion Barry cuts a far more priapic figure than either David Dinkins or—especially—Ed Koch. And

as those who were drawn in by this article's lurid headline will have suspected, there are indeed two notable exceptions to federal Washington's saltpetered pulse: the House and the Senate.

The reason is simple: practically everybody who works on Capitol Hill is an egomaniac from out of town.

Sperm Thurmond, for instance, is from South Carolina. He is the ranking Republican on the very important Senate Judiciary Committee and also, according to local legend, keeps a baseball bat in his office, a reference to his famous but perhaps apocryphal assertion that when he dies, his undertakers will need a baseball bat to knock down his erection so they can close the lid on his coffin.

Brock Adams is from out of town, too—Washington State. Two years ago a young woman accused the senator of drugging her with a mixture of champagne and chloral hydrate, putting her in bed in his house, taking off nearly all her clothes, getting into bed with her and trying to kiss her.

Freshman congressman Jim McCrery is newly arrived from Louisiana. Last year he was discovered by the press in a topless bar carousing unabashedly with a dancer's bra flapping on his head. "I didn't put the bra on my head," he explained later. "Someone else did."

"I think they hired a lot more prostitutes," says one Washington magazine writer, reminiscing about more carefree days on Capitol Hill, days before the Gary Hart–Donna Rice scandal, with its promise of an ever-more-vigilant press, cast a shadow on politicians nationwide. Nevertheless, men who couldn't get a date in high school can still enjoy a life rich in sexual adventure once they attain federal office. "Capitol Hill is full of nerdy guys who are ambitious and have done nothing but kiss ass at Rotary," says a reporter who has covered the Hill since 1977, "but [now] they are in a position to fuck gorgeous women. Capitol Hill is the optimal venue."

"You have the power," the reporter continues, "to hire beau-



D.C. sex machines: top, Senator Strom "Sperm" Thurmond; bottom, White House lobbyist George Will demonstrating why he drives the Potomac ladies wild



# WHEN THE HUNTER GETS CAPTURED BY THE GAME

SPY's Candid, Unsolicited Conversation With Buz Lukens, Congress's Only Convicted Sex Offender

Pausing from the rigors of reporting, we alighted at a quiet bar, Anton's Loyal Opposition, on Capitol Hill. It was mid-afternoon, the place was nearly

empty, and all that your correspondents—both female, blond and born in the 1960s—wanted was to refresh ourselves and get back to work. Instead, we found our respite interrupted by a congressman from Ohio, Donald E. "Buz" Lukens.

For Buz, as we came to know him, the past few months on the Hill have been difficult. Convicted of having had sex with a teenage girl back home in Columbus, the congressman was sentenced to 30 days in prison. Free on appeal, he has been dogged by calls for his resignation, which have caused an anguish he apparently can escape only by slipping out to Capitol Hill saloons and trying to make new friends. In this case, us.

Upon entering, Buz, who looks like a younger, heavily sedated Buddy Ebsen, an-

nounced to no one in particular, "My staff kicked me out for the *third* time today—they were doing a mailing, and they didn't want me around!" Then he spotted us. With a glimmer in his eye, he tugged on his preloosened ready-to-party necktie, shim-

mied across the bar floor and mounted a stool beside us.

"What are you doing here? You're too young to work," he laughed. Was he implying we were

hookers? We assured him that we weren't that young, but Buz wagged his finger and said, "If you're under 30, you're too young!" He hooted and initiated the first of his many high-spirited pats on our thighs.

There has always been an appreciation of power in this town, as Norman Ornstein has said, but for Buz it's an appreciation of femininity. That afternoon, Buz's radar for perky blonds was set on search-and-identify; swiveling his head around at any shadow that might say *babe*, he provided color commentary on

the passing scene: "Hey, who's she? Whoa! Didn't she used to work here?"

"It's easy to get stranded here," Buz went on. "Once a guy took me home in his truck.... A couple of times people have brought me home." When that confession failed to inspire a golly-weld-like-to-take-you-home-with-us response, Buz helped himself to one of our shoulders and hoisted his 190 pounds to his feet.

Prowling about the bar, he began pointing to autographed photos on the walls. "Hey, there's Gopher!" he said, meaning fellow Republican representative Fred Grandy of Iowa. "But don't call him Gopher! He's a real *sensitive* guy," he said, uttering the word *sensitive* as though it were something distasteful, like *diarrhea*. "He wants to keep all that *Love Boat* stuff in the past."

After we made the mistake of admitting that we'd seen *The Love Boat*, Buz concluded we were warming up. He wet his lips. "You know Gus Hawkins? That little black man from California? Well, he's 100 percent black, you know, but he looks white.... In the past he'd go somewhere with the black caucus and he'd get in before

the others, because they thought he was white! Now, that's funny!"

By this point we felt obliged to go. Buz, spent with laughter, looked us up and down slowly and said, "You're young, you don't have to worry about it, but once you get older..." He rolled his eyes and patted his sucked-in stomach. "It's real important to me to keep in good shape." And part of being in "good shape," if you're Buz, is having tidy cuticles. "I have my nails done.... When they're dirty, I have them done," he said, showing us his hands. "I mean"—he paused dramatically—"I *don't* have a wife or girlfriend to do it." He draped his arms around our shoulders, offered what seemed like a hug and pointed to the building across the street. "I've got an office over there," he said. "A very, very nice office. It's got some very nice marble." Interpreting the patient smiles on our faces as encouragement, Buz then delivered his final bon mot: "*Hell, I bet the two of you little girls stacked on top of each other don't make a six-footer!*"

Stack this, Buz.

—Andrea Rider and  
Elissa Schappell



Whoa, there, missy: Congressman Buz Lukens, lonely guy

tiful women to answer the phone. And you also have the staff that'll keep your ex-girlfriends away." A member has a variety of perks: Representative Charlie Wilson of Texas, for example, once cut appropriations to the Defense Intelligence Agency apparently because a local DIA official hadn't allowed his companion, a former Miss World, to fly over Afghanistan. (Unfortunately, the following four pages are entirely devoted to the antics of congressmen. This isn't meant to imply that being a congresswoman precludes being the subject of an amusing sexual anecdote, only that we didn't turn up any.)

It's not difficult to figure out the hierarchy of sexual attractiveness on Capitol Hill. A senator, of course, is at the top.

But the ladder goes all the way down to—*ick*—lobbyists. During the tax-reform debate in 1986, a congressman turned lobbyist was flirting with a young woman in a popular Capitol Hill bar. Representative Bob Carr of Michigan walked in and whisked her away, turning, as he left, to utter a parting shot. "Membership," he actually said, "has its privileges."

Congressional pages, of course, are now off-limits to all but the most daredevilish legislators. But Capitol Hill is also a Mecca for slightly older, statutorily safe young women with brand-new bachelor's degrees in political science from the University of Wisconsin. Or Vanderbilt. Or Tufts. Having freshly alighted, they fight to get interviews for jobs as junior



congressional staffers, jobs stuffing envelopes or answering phones or opening constituents' mail, jobs that start at \$12,000 a year—enough, maybe, to cover the rent on their one-fifth share of a row house on North Carolina Avenue, with change left over for drinks each week at the principal staffers' bars along Pennsylvania Avenue, where most every young man the aides meet turns out to be an aide as well, with another one of those \$12,000-a-year jobs stuffing envelopes. But wait—there, by the bar, lurks the congressman with his powerful aphrodisiac, power. Better yet, there's a senator...

"There are a lot of extremely brief encounters," says a close observer of Capitol Hill's singles-and-soon-to-be-singles scene. "They last about five minutes. Unlike in New York, there aren't the elaborate courting rituals that go on for three or four hours. The conventional wisdom is that extremely powerful men have extremely powerful libidos. They also have low intimacy thresholds. So they have brusque sexual habits." Or as Senator Don Riegle Jr. of Michigan once said in a tape-recorded conversation with an aide with whom he was carrying on an extramarital affair, "I—I—God, I feel such super love for you. By the way, the newsletter should start arriving."

Perhaps not surprisingly, election to Congress is often followed by divorce. (In fact, about one-third of congressmen are divorced.) Dowdy, corn-fed wives who made suitable helpmates for small-town Jaycees follow their husbands to Washington and discover they can't compete with the sleek young professionals to whom their husbands now have access. Senator Riegle, for instance, eventually dumped both wife and mistress in order to marry a second aide—to whom he had brutishly boasted about his affair with the first. A wife with any interest in her own reelection, so to speak, must be determined to keep a watchful eye on her man; Heather Foley and Annette Lantos have met this challenge by working as unpaid staffers for their husbands, Speaker of the House Tom Foley and California representative Tom Lantos.

But even an omnipresent wife will find she has her work

## AS SENATOR DON RIEGLE JR. OF MICHIGAN ONCE SAID IN A TAPE-RECORDED CONVERSATION WITH AN AIDE, "I—I—GOD, I FEEL SUCH SUPER LOVE FOR YOU. BY THE WAY, THE NEWSLETTER SHOULD START ARRIVING"

cut out for her: the Capitol itself seems to have been designed for furtive, illicit sex. Walk down the august hallways and you will see lines of doors on either side, some with numbers, some without. Behind some of the doors are offices. Behind others are little cubbyholes, rooms scarcely bigger than broom closets. Generally off-limits to all but senators, these nooks are the senators' real offices, or more so, anyway, than their official quarters in the various Senate office buildings. When a floor vote is imminent, an observer can see the legislators streaming out of the unmarked rooms as if appearing from nowhere. Some, like straight-arrow Gordon Humphrey of New Hampshire, actually use their cubbyholes for work. But many senators use the hideaways, just big

enough to hold couches, for swift, efficient trysts. Keys are distributed along strict seniority lines, and Ted Kennedy, the fifth most senior senator, reportedly has been rewarded with more than one hideaway for his 28 years of service.

Kennedy, of course, is the standard by which all of Washing-



Peevish representative Charles Wilson and top foreign-policy adviser Miss World

ton's stickmen are measured, even if he doesn't have a winking, high-school-ish nickname like Thurmond's. "I bet if they write the Ted Kennedy pussy book, it'll be a pretty big volume," an admiring colleague was recently overheard remarking to Kennedy as the two rode a private senatorial elevator in the Capitol. "Yes," the Massachusetts senator charmingly replied, "and there'll be another chapter written tonight."

And yet even Ted Kennedy is subject to Washington's worker-bee ethos. "When does he have sex?" asks *The Washingtonian's* Rudy Maxa. "He grabs it in the afternoon at La Brasserie [the restaurant where Kennedy reportedly had sex with a lobbyist on the carpet]. There's a guy with a busy schedule." But not *too* busy: a young friend of his 28-year-old son, Teddy Jr., left word for his pal on the Kennedy's vacation-house answering machine not long ago. *Hey, Teddy, my man, the caller said, I'm back in town. Care to join me for some intense barhopping and bim-scamming?* (Or words to that effect.) And sure enough, Teddy called back, enthusiastically expressing a desire to go out and par-ty—only the Teddy who responded was Teddy Sr., much to the young friend's understandable alarm.

Christopher Dodd, divorced Democrat from Connecticut, is generally considered to be the Senate's number two swordsman, though some would call the contest a tie. "The only difference between Ted Kennedy and Chris Dodd," says a Hill insider, "is that Dodd can dance." Indeed, his affair with Bianca Jagger has become institutional folklore. (And he accomplished that despite his status as one of the ten poorest senators—further testament to power's stark allure.) Dodd's rivalry with Kennedy is apparently a friendly one: he is known to be a frequent guest on Ted's yacht, on which the two are said to cruise Cape Cod seducing waitresses from dock-side restaurants.

Another contender is 46-year-old Democrat John Kerry, Massachusetts's junior senator. Immediately after his election in 1984, Kerry ditched the woman who was both his fiancée and his former law partner. Moving to Washington, Kerry discovered Hollywood. More specifically, he discovered Morgan Fairchild, who has a penchant for senators, even the geriatric, skull-headed Alan Cranston; Michelle Phillips; and Catherine Oxenberg. (It's hard to be a Democrat these days and escape the Beverly Hills pool-party circuit.)

But Kerry hasn't confined his discoveries to the stars of nighttime soaps. Elsewhere along the line, he has also discovered a summer intern in his office; a receptionist; a British journalist; a Boston University student; and even a waitress



at Biba, the trendy Cambridge restaurant where he and—who else?—Ted Kennedy went prowling a few months ago (Teddy picked up a waitress, too). Kerry's attempt to patch things up with his former fiancée faltered when she caught him in Phillips's company on one occasion and later learned that he'd sneaked off for a rendezvous with Fairchild during a trip he and the fiancée had taken to Israel.

"These men are charming and attentive," says a woman who has "socialized" with Kerry and Kennedy and Dodd, "but there is no one they like to be with as much as themselves. They're really very Irish when it comes to women."

"They're *commitmentphobes*," sighs a Washington journalist, using a popular self-help synonym for what an earlier generation called *swingles*.

But then, the whole Massachusetts congressional delegation is by far the nation's wildest. For starters, hardly anyone in the delegation is married, and the delegation also contains both of the country's openly gay congressmen, Barney Frank and Gerry Studds (the latter made a national name for himself when it was revealed in 1983 that he had slept with a male congressional page). Young Joe Kennedy, a congressman from Brighton, hangs around with his Uncle Ted. But, says an observer, he "doesn't cat around too much." Nor does he have to: on a recent occasion he deftly culled an attractive reporter for a newsweekly from one of the flocks of journalists that each day pass through his workplace. (It's not hard. All the girls in Washington have crushes on handsome Joe—as does Barney Frank, who, according to one published account, said while the two were at a House softball game that he wanted to "do it" with Joe.) Another Massachusetts congressman, Democrat Ed Markey, was the object of a recent screaming match when his longtime girlfriend discovered him with another woman at his house in Malden.

NONE OF THIS HAS BEEN INTENDED TO SUGGEST THAT DEMOCRATS and Bay Staters have a lock on what passes for pheromonal charisma in Washington. The Reagan years brought to town a raft of supply-siders and movement conservatives, many of them determined—*just like liberals!*—to fornicate in closets and on the floors of restaurants. In this vein former Reagan-Bush speech writer Peggy Noonan has included a poem in her recent memoir, *What I Saw at the Revolution: A Political Life in the Reagan Era*, that describes a hypothetical young conservative in language that is blatantly—and, one would assume, consciously—erotic:



Bay State bad boys: Ted Kennedy on skirt patrol; Representative Barney Frank is said to have pined for Teddy's nephew Joe.

[He] stands poised  
for a moment, inhaling,  
legs firmly planted,  
a moist smile starting on his moist pink lips...  
thick-thighed legs firmly planted in the moment...  
He sniffs, knows,  
stiffens...

## "I'M SORRY—I THOUGHT YOU WERE FAWN HALL"

### A Cavalcade of Bad Pickup Lines from Our Nation's Capital

Women in Washington have long bemoaned the consequences of a male-to-female ratio they reckon at one to six (or, on some dismal nights when Senators Kennedy and Dodd and the rest are home with their constituents, one to nine). One of the saddest consequences of this is the condition into which the lovespeak of males in the District has fallen—it is uninspired, unpolished, unpracticed, and it would be unsuccessful in any but the most desperate circumstances. In late January SPY dispatched a pair of female operatives to the city by the Potomac, where they entrenched themselves in such representative Georgetown boîtes as the Tune Inn, the Hawk and Dove, Third Edition, Stetson's, Nathan's and Paolo's and over the course of a mere two evenings harvested these real, rather pathetic pickup lines from the cream of Washington manhood. (Shockingly, these lines do occasionally work. Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute explains, "There's no accounting for taste.")



"Aren't you a GS-15?"

"I'm ready to bare my Social Security number to you"

"Want to see my inaugural license plates?"

"In the old days men used to purchase their women with livestock, like cows. You're so beautiful, you're worth a herd—a barnyard full of animals"

"Don't you work for Senator Metzenbaum?"

"Let me show you *my* impersonation of the Washington Monument"

"Didn't you work on the Dukakis campaign?"

"Don't you miss Reagan?"

"Your hair looks nice on you"

"Hey, didn't I have sex with you once?"

"You and I should be on a beach, licking the condensation off a bottle of Riunite"

"I'm an elephant with a great big trunk"

"I think this situation calls for a congressional probe"

"Do you want to see my congressional probe?"

"Hey, weren't you one of those pages involved in that sex scandal?"

"Come on over to my place. I'll make a fire. We can watch a little C-SPAN"

—Andrea Rider and Elissa Schappell



Less ideological observers than Noonan have a more jaundiced view of the breed. "They're really into garter belts," says a woman who has dated a number of Reaganauts. "They always want to know if you're wearing a garter belt. But they think that actually having sex is wrong."

She describes a romantic evening with a prominent man of the right. First there was the suite at the Hay-Adams and then the caviar and Dom Perignon. To top it off, he gave her a diamond necklace. And then the big moment—nothing. "He just wanted to sit and fantasize," she remembers. "If I'd said, 'Let's fuck,' he'd have been scared. For one thing, right-wing weirdos think that you can catch about 60 million [venereal] diseases. They're obsessed with that." Indeed, a former Reagan White House official is said to use two condoms whenever he has sex.

Whatever she was thinking of, Peggy Noonan was most

## "THESE MEN ARE CHARMING AND ATTENTIVE," SAYS A WOMAN WHO HAS "SOCIALIZED" WITH KERRY AND KENNEDY AND DODD, "BUT THEY'RE REALLY VERY IRISH WHEN IT COMES TO WOMEN"

certainly not thinking of Quentin Crommelin, a former high-ranking adviser to Senator Jesse Helms (and *Sperm Thurmond* too!) who ended his career last summer by pleading guilty to charges that he'd sexually assaulted a Capitol Hill intern. In 1983 he'd been accused of raping another young intern; charges were dropped, but rumors of further Crommelinian advances snaked around the hill. By one account his favorite seduction line was "Do it for your country." A source for the *Washington Times* recalled a particularly revealing evening spent with Crommelin: first he had a few drinks too many, then he wept about his love for a teenage second cousin he wanted to marry back home in Wetempka, Alabama.

The intern whose accusations brought Crommelin down testified that during supposed business trips, Crommelin would periodically climb into her bed; the assault that led to criminal charges occurred when the young woman—let's call her Margaret—accompanied him to a suburban Virginia restaurant. On the trip home, driving past a Civil War battlefield, an inebriated Crommelin made his move. "Oh, Margaret, don't you know how much I love you?" he said, attempting to force her into an act of oral sex. "I just love you so much. But you are still a Yankee at heart. There used to be Civil War battles here, but they aren't in the history books. Oh, yes, we used to love those Yankees. We loved them so much. We loved them so much that we cracked their skulls open and put guns through their hearts."

Episodes of sexual harassment—with or without Faulknerian overtones—have long been a staple on the Hill, where as late as the mid-1970s legislators were still using phrases like *young women* and *pretty* in their congressional-placement-office directives, and where Texas representative Charlie Wilson, for one, was known to explain his hiring decisions with the folksy aphorism "You can teach 'em to type, but you can't

## UP CLOSE

### SPY Pronounces This Grand Old Party Animal

Almost reflexively, the cosmopolites of New York City dismiss the Washington "nightlife" scene as irredeemably square. Is this fair? In a spirit of open-minded inquiry, SPY went to the Queen City of the Potomac in order to observe one of its more legendary bar-hopping machines, Republican National Committee chairman Lee Atwater.

According to Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute, Atwater "will do whatever it takes to win." In 1988 Atwater's staff developed information that allowed him to approach his opposite numbers in the Democratic Party and propose that Republicans would ignore the activities of a certain Massachusetts state trooper and Kitty Dukakis if Democrats would not mention the way a certain presidential aide, Jennifer Fitzgerald, conducted her affairs. Politics, according to Atwater, is not for innocents.

#### Thursday, January 18

**6:00 p.m.:** Accompanied by our photographer, Fritz Myer, we depart our rooms in Washington's Vista International Hotel to begin our study of Atwater.

**7:00 p.m.:** Staked out in front of the so-called Hinckley Hilton, where President Reagan was shot, we watch Lee Atwater arrive with his wife and two children for the Bush-Quayle Reunion, a \$30-a-head fundraiser celebrating the administration's first year in office.

**7:30 p.m.:** We approach a booth marked PRESS REGISTRATION and are told that only the White House press corps will be allowed entrance. We return to our maroon Buick Century and review our options.

**8:00 p.m.:** We go back to the reception and mumble something vaguely authoritative to the security guards, who, in what is certainly a grave breach of security, grant us immediate entry.

**8:45 p.m.:** While enjoying some complimentary Corona and prime rib, we marvel at the multitude of attractive right-wing women. We laugh politely at the jokes told by the vice president ("It's been over a year since George Bush rode to victory on my coattails") and then by the president himself ("Roger Ailes gave me a personality, and we paid him in pints of Haagen-Dazs").

**9:00 p.m.:** The formalities concluded, Atwater begins working the crowd of more than 2,000. Pressing flesh and posing for photographs, often with young women, Atwater has occasion to recall some of the happier whistle-stops on the campaign trail, perhaps even that moment during a convention when outgoing Republican chairman Frank Fahrenkopf Jr. entered Atwater's hotel room and found Atwater reading bedtime stories to a pair of female staffers.

**9:30 p.m.:** We pose for photos with Atwater and ask him to autograph our ties. "That's crazy," he sensibly replies before agreeing.

**9:45 p.m.:** We reposition ourselves in the hotel's driveway, ready to follow Atwater's Mercury Grand Marquis. Worried that he might elude us in the heavy traffic leaving the party, we insert potatoes into the vehicle's twin tail pipes to slow him down.

**10:20 p.m.:** The guests exit en masse. Sitting low in our seats, we prepare our ears for the trauma that will result once the aforementioned tubers backfire and a shrill "Eek!" rises from the throng. But everyone remains as placid as cows



# AND PERSONAL WITH LEE ATWATER, HOMEBODY

## Thoroughly Domesticated

when Atwater's limo fires up and turns onto Connecticut Avenue. We pursue, following the scent of baked potatoes.

**10:30 p.m.:** We make a left onto Calvert Street and pull up behind the Marquis at a red light. Suddenly, the RNC chairman bounds out of the backseat and knocks on our car window. Flummoxed, we smile and open the door. "You boys seem to know where I'm goin'," says Atwater. "Why don't you give me a ride home?" *Uh, okay*, we say.

**10:35 p.m.:** As we head for his house in Foxhall, Atwater makes himself at home by handing over a demo tape of his upcoming album, recorded with B. B. King and other R&B legends. "I'm bad, I'm bad, I'm the worst you ever had," Atwater-on-tape sings as Atwater-in-the-flesh grins.

**10:40 p.m.:** Atwater asks us if we've been to his barbecue restaurant, Red, Hot and Blue. We admit that we have, pointing out that the onion loaf was problematic for hours afterward. "They do tend to say 'Hi,'" he says. Atwater switches back to music, commenting on blues guitarists ("I love Clapton and all that, but it's like Potter Stewart—you know it when you see it. Clapton doesn't have it." We assume Atwater is referring to Stewart's famous comment about obscenity, though perhaps he just interjects "Potter Stewart" from time to time the way some people say "Great Caesar's ghost").

**10:42 p.m.:** An Atwater peroration on *Blade Runner* ("It's like Clapton—it has great scenes, but..." *Something about Potter Stewart, perhaps?*) is interrupted by our arrival at his house. Prompted by innate southern hospitality, or perhaps by a desire to bolster his image as the city's premier homebody, Atwater invites us in.

**10:45 p.m.:** Atwater wakes his wife, Sally, who comes downstairs in her bathrobe to greet us. She is literally barefoot and pregnant. "Hey, honey, do we have any beer for these boys?" he asks. After she says yes, Atwater dismisses her for the evening. Tossing out a pair of Miller Lites, he invites us down to the basement rumpus room. Unexceptionally decorated—suburban pseudo-Colonial themes prevail—the room is dominated by a giant-screen television, on which Atwater on quieter nights might watch such underappreciated jewels as *Shaft in Africa*. (When contacted for information on Atwater's viewing choices, the owner of the local Video Vault informed us that Atwater enjoys "a little bit of everything" but "no bondage or crazy stuff like that.") Atwater also has a good stereo system, on which he again plays his demo tape. He keeps staring at us to see how we react. When we interrupt one of his solos to ask a question about the future of the Republican Party, he directs us to "shut up." A hyperkinetic fellow—he jiggles as if hooked up to jumper cables—Atwater can't keep his seat for two minutes at a time before he starts dancing around and jamming on air guitar.

**10:50 p.m.:** Atwater, one of George Bush's most stalwart supporters, tells us how much he admires the Three Stooges. Outsize statuettes of Larry, Moe and Curly adorn the room's mantel, standing out among the many photos of Presidents Reagan and Bush. Waxing lyrical for a moment, Atwater talks briefly of his warm, personal relationship with Joe Besser, the penultimate Curly replacement, whom he often phoned from the Reagan White House.

**10:55 p.m.:** Atwater gets a call from an aide, who tells him that Washington's mayor, Marion Barry, has just been arrested for smoking crack cocaine. Atwater flips on his TV. We stare in amazement as the news reports reveal that Barry has been apprehended in a room on the seventh floor of the Vista hotel.

As we nonchalantly mention our familiarity with the place—"Hey! That's our hotel! Hey, that's the floor *we're* staying on!"—Atwater tells us to "shut the fuck up" but soon begins chuckling. "Here you guys are following boring ol' me around when the mayor of D.C.'s gettin' busted right under your noses!" Hooting, he makes a final pronouncement: "You guys are the Katzenjammer Kids of American journalism—no, the F Troop!" Taking a second look at one of us, Atwater laughs, "Yeah, in fact you kind of even *look* like Larry Storch."

**11:30 p.m.:** Although Atwater asked that most of our conversation inside his house be off the record, it's safe to say that a vast number of political and cultural issues were discussed, including James Brown ("I had that guy *out*, and then he had to go and get caught with \$50,000 in his jail cell") and certain best-selling books ("You only have to read the first chapter of *Liar's Poker* to get the gist of it").

**11:45 p.m.:** Before shooing us out the basement door, Atwater plays us some farewell scales on the (unplugged) Stratocaster that (he makes sure to tell us) Ron Wood gave him, while simultaneously

sharing some philosophy with us: "I think music helps in politics and in everything else. If everyone played a musical instrument, everyone would be a lot nicer, like me. I'm such a kind and gentle person. Awright, now git the hell outta here."

Returning to our hotel, we tried to capture the scene at the Vista in the aftermath of Barry's arrest. As it turned out, the hotel staff had been ordered not to talk; all obeyed except one worker who apparently understood little English. We quizzed her in our best high school Spanish ("*El mejor, el jefe, fume in que room, que numero?*"), but that failed to advance the story. We retired, frustrated on the Barry beat but relishing our evening of guy gab with Atwater. As we drifted off, a montage of the night's vivid moments floated through our memories—the way Atwater puckered his little fist-shaped face as he



Lee Atwater walked out of our dreams and into our car, then he wouldn't shut up.

played air guitar; the way he flopped in his Barcalounger and jiggled his leg; his mention of Potter Stewart. As sleep overtook us, we made a mental note to call the Republican National Committee in the morning and let them know that their chairman still had two potatoes in his tail pipes.

—John Brodie and Bob Mack



teach 'em to grow tits." Helpfully, the 1972 federal Equal Employment Opportunity Act makes sex discrimination on the job illegal everywhere in America *except on Capitol Hill*, because our legislators, in an unusually candid display of self-knowledge, wrote themselves an exemption (thus they can also, if they so choose, discriminate on the basis of race).

Jim Bates is a fourth-term Democratic congressman from California whose nearly all-female staff suffered several recent defections when they reached the conclusion that the congressman's frequent "brushes" against them weren't entirely accidental. Bates reportedly hugs his staffers frequently and with off-putting enthusiasm and is said to greet young women with a handshake in which he rubs his sweaty middle finger against their palm. In 1988 two of his former employees, Dorena Bertussi and Karen Dryden, filed sexual-harassment complaints with the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, charging, among other things, that Bates had straddled Bertussi's leg one day and ridden back and forth on it in front of other employees; that he had grabbed Dryden's posterior when she went into his private office; and that he had put his hand on her knee while driving her to the subway after a fundraiser—a fundraiser, as it happened, for Gary Hart.

The committee could not corroborate the specific allegations against Bates, but it interviewed a number of female witnesses who gave accounts of other incidents involving the congressman: frequent hugs, hands on derrieres, references by the congressman to his allegedly frequent states of arousal, and

ing against Bates has made her an outcast in a clubby, mutually defensive world. "I'm essentially ruined on the Hill," she says. "I couldn't get another job if I left Richard Baker's office."

THE GREAT UNTOLD TALE OF CAPITOL HILL MAY BE THE SHAM marriages entered into by gay congressmen. She gets the pres-



We so horny: left, heavy-petting congressman Jim Bates; congressional aide and frustrated cousin-lover Quentin Crommelin

tige name; he gets a wife and kids and in so doing looks like an electable bet. He also gets a family dog to use as a beard while he walks around Capitol Hill's gay neighborhoods checking out the local talent.

According to sources, the percentage of gay congressmen is in line

with the 10 percent figure usually given for society at large, and the congressional men's gym was recently closed on Saturdays, reportedly because it had become a hot weekend trysting spot. Unlikely? Perhaps; an environment where one might, at any moment, glimpse Alfonse D'Amato or Howell Heflin in the nude hardly suggests erotic possibility. But don't forget: gay or straight, *it's still Washington*.

The capital's gay-sex scandals, unlike their cartoonish heterosexual counterparts, tend to have a sad, frustrated quality. In 1980 Maryland's right-wing representative Robert Bauman was charged with soliciting sex from a 16-year-old boy he had spotted dancing in the buff at The Chesapeake House, a bar in downtown Washington that today sports a large NO MINORS ALLOWED sign on its facade (he pleaded innocent and entered a treatment program for first-time sex offenders). In 1981 right-wing representative Jon Hinson of Mississippi was picked up in the Longworth office building men's room (another reputed Hill trysting spot) before he could finish fellating a male library employee. And perhaps the most tellingly Washingtonian revelation of all in the recent Barney Frank scandal was Steve

Gobie's claim that the non-right-wing congressman was less interested in actual physical sex than in listening to the young call boy spin dirty tales about his clientele.

THE CONCLUSION? YES, THERE IS SOME SEX IN WASHINGTON, but it's mostly bad sex, silly sex, ugly sex or sex that would probably seem pitiable if those having it weren't the very elected officials who last year caved in to moral pressure groups and passed prim legislation intended to neuter the National Endowment for the Arts.

And so Capitol Hill's glandular oasis bubbles along contentedly amid the larger asensual desert that is the District of Columbia. Ted Kennedy's pussy book grows fatter, thick-thighed conservatives continue to dream of bigger and better hosiery apparatuses, young female aides find stray senatorial hands cupping their bottoms, while others consent to two-minute service stops in closet-size rut rooms.

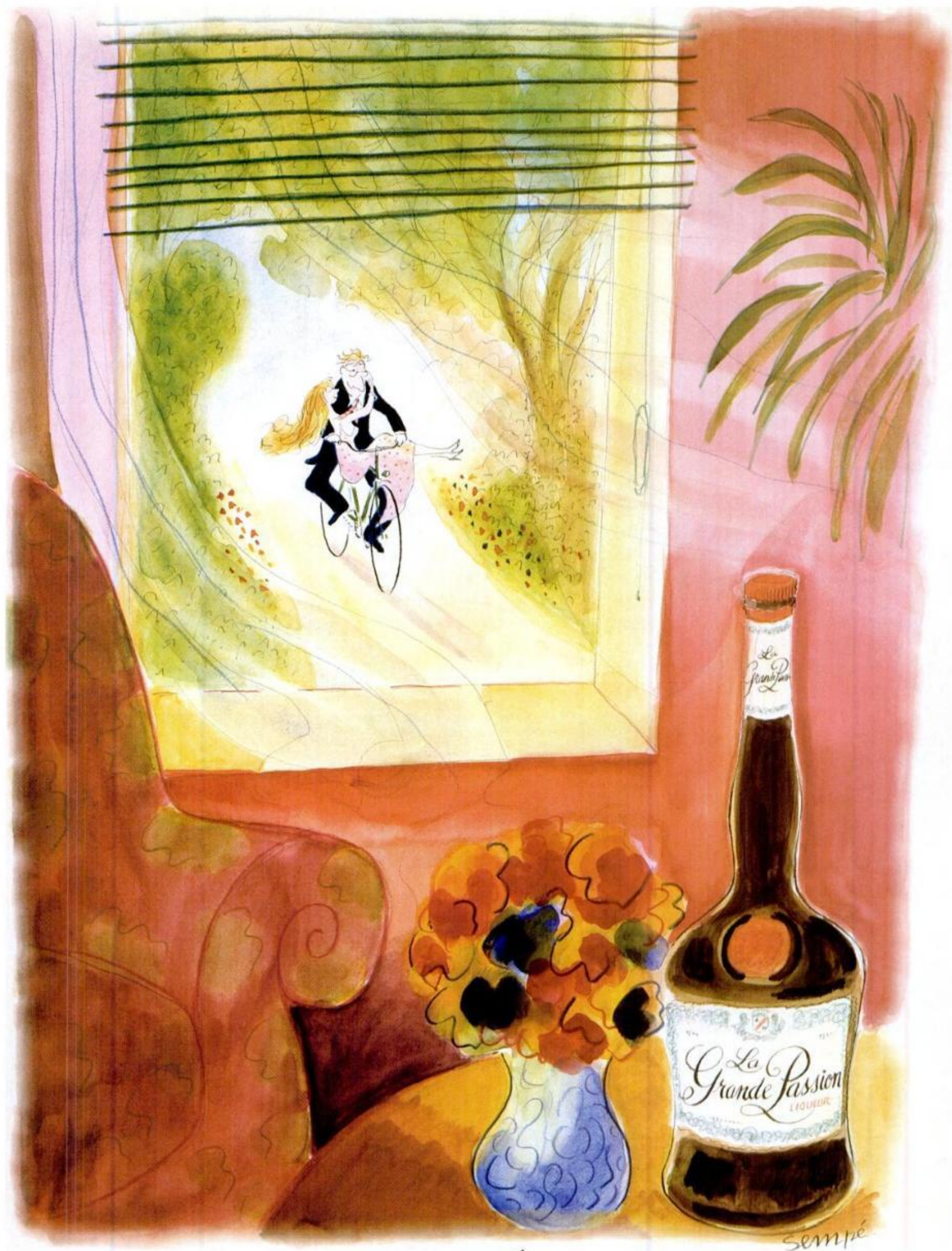
Wham, bam, thank you, miss. *Now see to that stack of constituent mail!* ☛

## THE MOST TELLINGLY WASHINGTONIAN REVELATION OF ALL IN THE BARNEY FRANK SCANDAL WAS GOBIE'S CLAIM THAT FRANK WAS LESS INTERESTED IN ACTUAL SEX THAN IN LISTENING TO DIRTY TALES ABOUT GOBIE'S CLIENTELE

so on. In a report issued last fall the committee concluded it was "reasonable" for Bertussi and Dryden to accuse Bates of harassment, but it meted out light punishment to Bates, who assured the committee he was getting "professional" guidance on how to act around women in the office. His official act of penance was to write a letter of apology to both women.

Today Bates says it was all a misunderstanding, and he blames his problem on House ethics standards, which permit a strictly subjective definition of sexual harassment. "[Dorena Bertussi] must have felt that it was harassment," he says, suggesting unspoken alternative interpretations of having one's leg dry-humped in public against one's will. Incredibly, Bates has also been heard to complain that the bureaucratic "sensitivity" measures he has been forced to put into effect have hampered office efficiency—which prompted Dorena Bertussi to write (in a recent letter to *Roll Call*, the weekly newspaper for Capitol Hill) that she had "lost many important work hours... trying to pry him from my leg." Although she now works for Representative Richard Baker of Louisiana, she claims that testify-





*A passion for spring*  
*la grande passion. A sensual coupling of passion fruit and french armagnac,*

For gift delivery of La Grande Passion anywhere, call 1-800-CHEER-UP (except where prohibited by law). Product of France. 48 proof. ©1988 Carillon Importers, Ltd., Teaneck, N.J.



## THE GRADERS

# GRADED

*You can't tell the critics without a report card*

BY HENRY 'DUTCH' HOLLAND

"You are not the kind of reporter who would be at a place like this at this time in the evening."

Uh-oh.

### REVIEW OF REVIEWERS

It doesn't matter that *The New Republic's* Jacob Weisberg does an okay job sustaining this conceit in "Bright Lights, Spin City," his essay on congressional reaction to Bush's State of the Union speech. What matters is that *Bright Lights, Big City* was published in 1984, that parodies of *Bright Lights, Big City* had been retired by 1985 and that writers who attempt them in 1990 should be flayed. Weisberg might just as well have begun his piece, "It was the best of spins, it was the worst of spins...."

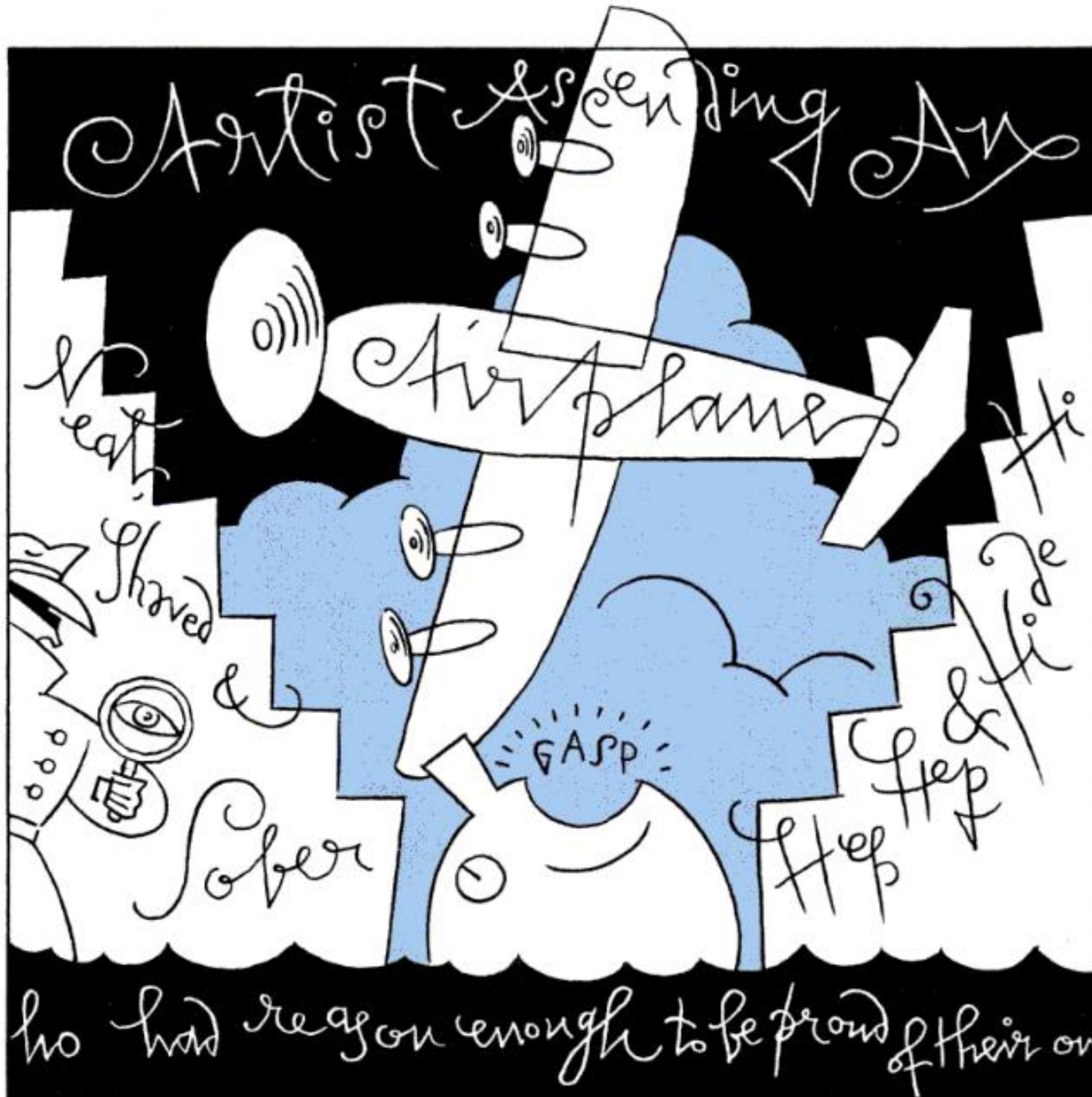
There is nothing quite like *The Washington Times*—a paper that Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute says is "trying like hell" to be the *New York Post*. "Two great movies about race relations...brighten the Martin Luther King Holiday weekend," the newspaper announced, with admirable-seeming enthusiasm, on its lead entertainment page. But just inside, movie critic Gary Arnold, sounding like a relatively open-minded plantation owner circa 1850, described the Denzel Washington character in *Glory* as "a colorful rascal if there ever was one." Just in case you forgot what paper you were reading.

Arnold is not afraid to swing wide—to the right, of course—in order to bring politics into his criticism. "Here's the alternative big picture [to *Born on the Fourth of July*]," he said elsewhere in his review of *Glory*, "and one that doesn't repudiate the stirring and even ennobling aspects of military service and sacrifice." Even *Leatherface*—*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre III* reminds him of you-know-what-objectionable-lefty-picture ("Come to think of it, Oliver Stone in *Born on the Fourth of July* seems more interested in sickening provocation"). Arnold also has trouble admitting what even the harshest critics of *Roger & Me* acknowledge—that the movie

is funny. (He manages to say that it "appear[s] amusing...at the outset.") And in the middle of a review of *Strike It Rich*, while advancing the plausible argument that Molly Ringwald "hasn't made an intelligent career decision since *Time* doted on her in a cover story," Dr. Arnold turns into Mr. Hyde. "Did any of Mikhail Gorbachev's American experts inform him of the jinx associated with becoming a *Time* cover subject?" he suddenly screeches, for no apparent reason.

Murray Kempton's recent essay on envy contains a sentence so impenetrable that the light emitted by a 100-watt bulb will not pass through it—not in its 30-pound Century Schoolbook incarnation in *Newsday*, where it originally appeared, and not in its 35-pound Clarendon version in *The New York Review of Books*, where it was reprinted:

The cankerings of this spirit may explain why so many physicists who had reason enough to be proud of their own parts to need none of the sour consolations of being jealous of [Robert] Oppenheimer's, disgraced themselves by enjoying, and in some instances contributing to, the defamations



Illustrations by Notusko Lessnik



that seared a man perhaps too devotedly patriotic with the scar that proclaimed him unfit for his country's trust.

For those of you who, flailing your arms and gasping for air, have made it through that dense slab of prose to this paragraph, a reward awaits you: one Merkin. A Merkin is an entertaining nugget of choice Merkinese, that curious dialect—part Perelman, part Chaucer, part Roger—encountered only in those pages of *GQ* where the delightful artist/writer/bon vivant Richard Merkin is king. This month's Merkin is the first half of the first sentence of his piece on certain dos and don'ts of dressing. So, Kempton survivors, here is your well-earned Merkin: "Awash as we are in torrents of print regarding issues sartorial..." It's none of my business, but for any book publishers reading, here are three suggested titles, all inspired by that half sentence, for the Merkin omnibus you'll soon be bidding on: *Issues Sartorial: The Collected Merkin*. Or *Torrents of Print: Merkin on Style*. Or *Awash as We Are: The Prose, Style and Prose Style of Richard Merkin*. Take your pick.

No Merkins are awarded to *Time's* estimable Walter Shapiro, who tries to go his subject one better by sprinkling his profile of *New York Times* columnist William Safire with wordplay, puns and alliteration—just the sort of thing Safire would supposedly enjoy. Bad idea. Shapiro somehow found it within himself to sign his name to a piece containing these phrases: "parade of predictions," "Pulitzer-prizewinning pundit," "surefire Safirific," "mainstream musings," "wry-not enthusiasms," "gift of glib," "journalistic jousting," "pretentious punditry" and "dovish dissenters." But best of all is his rhyme "There was nothing craven about this language maven," which sounds like a lyric lifted from *Yo! MTV Raps*. (Come to think of it, Shapiro Moe Dee even *samples* Safire—he mentions *nattering nabobs of negativism*, the Spiro Agnew oldie concocted by the former speech writer.)

Mervyn "Once Upon a Time" Rothstein of *The New York Times* is another writer with a bad case of the Appropriates. Assigned to interview Tom Stoppard as *Artist Descending a Staircase* was about to open on Broadway, Rothstein had just the gimmick the story called for: *Since the play moves backward and then forward in time*, he apparently reasoned,

wouldn't it be neat if my article did, too? And so Rothstein, who interviewed the playwright at Kennedy airport, presented "Artist Ascending an Airplane"—what he called "an interview drama in 11 scenes," its structure a confusing carbon of Stoppard's play.

A few weeks later, Rothstein was assigned a story on James Naughton, the actor who plays a hard-boiled detective in *City of Angels*. Again he rose to the occasion: *The shamus*, he knew in a flash, *c'est moi*.

"I was neat, clean, shaved and sober, and I didn't care who knew it," says Rothstein out of the side of his mouth as he heads for the interview. "I was everything the well-dressed journalist ought to be." But Rothstein doesn't keep his eye on the ball. Halfway through, decidedly soft-boiled phrases like "tiny doubts" and "the road not taken" begin to creep in, and no amount of *this guy Naughton-ing* here and *this Naughton guy-ing* there can salvage the blurring image of Mervyn Rothstein, private dick.

Overassigned movie critic Peter "I Never Met a Movie I Didn't Like" Travers briefly metamorphosed into *ornery* over-assigned movie critic Peter Travers. *Variety* recently reported that the once-legendary cheerleader of *Rolling Stone* had, in one stretch, published three ambivalent and three negative reviews—no positives! Furthermore, a recent issue of *Rolling Stone* even contained a letter from a reader complaining about a Travers pan. It seemed unbelievable. It was. That same issue contained four positive Travers reviews (out of five). *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* was a "stinging chiller with a provocative past and a potentially bright future." *Love at Large* was a "seductive comic valentine enriched by style, feeling and splendid performances." *The Laserman* was "that rare comedy with a brain and a heart." And *Mama, There's a Man in Your Bed* was "effervescent, beautifully acted...under [director Coline] Serreau's magic wand." Call the studio publicity department! Ready the marquees! Peter Travers is back.

*John Simon: The Serialized Résumé* continues to appear sporadically in the theater pages of *New York* magazine. When we last tuned in (October 1989), the larval drama critic was starring on the rugby teams at Cambridge and Harvard. In this episode we find the young

Simon still at Harvard, attending plays. "Not since our Harvard student days," he wrote of Jerome Kilty's performance in *The Doctor's Dilemma*, "when I saw him do Ursula the pig-woman in *Bartholomew Fair*, have I seen such ham." Next installment: Simon, reviewing a revival of Gorky's *The Lower Depths*, is somehow reminded of his Harvard student days.

Where were you when you heard the Trumps were getting divorced? I was reading Liz Smith—let's give her credit for that much. She took the credit, anyway—took it day in and day out during that giddy week that ended, hilariously, with her blaming the ongoing "media circus" on insatiable editors' demanding Lizproduct. This after a period of a few days during which Smith had allowed her photo to appear on the front page of the *Daily News* twice; reminded readers at least four times—not including her *Live at Five* appearances—that she had delivered the "exclusive" the previous weekend; listed the newspapers and television shows that had interviewed her; and assured us, "Lest you think this story is overblown...and not worthy of the paper and print it is taking, please know that the story is a big one in Paris and probably in Japan." (*Probably* in Japan?) But if she sounded a little loopy, the signs were there early in the week, when Smith ended her column with this:

Rabid Katharine Hepburn fans might be interested to know I have received a collector's item, a brief note from the woman herself. Love the way she signed it, very simply, just "Kate Hep—." And she is, hep, hep, and hi de hi!

Can any subsequent erratic behavior really come as a surprise?

Finally, for those who admire the sort of high-school-term-paper criticism espoused by the editors of *Entertainment Weekly*, here is a handy detachable checklist distillation of the column you have just finished reading. Carry it wherever you go. ☛

|                  |    |                |    |
|------------------|----|----------------|----|
| Gary Arnold      | C  | John Simon     | B- |
| Murray Kempton   | C  | Liz Smith      | C+ |
| Richard Merkin   | B- | Peter Travers  | C+ |
| Mervyn Rothstein | C+ | Jacob Weisberg | B- |
| Walter Shapiro   | C+ |                |    |



## A GREAT

# LEAK

## FORWARD

*Getting ahead by talking  
your head off*

BY CHARLES KAISER

When Congressman Tony Coelho was forced to resign last year as the Democratic majority whip, it was a shock to many citizens living outside the Beltway (and even to some of those within it) to learn that Coelho actually had very little talent as a legislator. But an instant after his fall, which was precipitated by some unseemly dealing in junk bonds, knowing reporters eagerly revealed the ineptitude he had hidden behind a remarkable ability to raise campaign funds for his Democratic colleagues in the House. Practically the only legislation he had ever shepherded through the House dealt with the needs of those who, like Coelho himself, suffer from epilepsy.

How had Coelho kept his limitations as a congressman a secret from the public? With the technique favored by savvy public figures everywhere: he became the reporter's best friend. By mastering the basic skills of the expert media-handler—being accessible, memorizing reporters' deadlines, knowing the differences between the needs of a print reporter and those of a broadcaster, becoming an indispensable source—Coelho bought himself a measure of protection from Washington's ostensibly tough, cynical press corps. "Coelho was exceedingly good," says a national correspondent for *The Washington Post*. "A lot of reporters are very upset about losing him," another Washington journalist

says. "He loved to talk."

The capital is rife with expert media-handlers—indeed, they can be found everywhere. But only rarely are these journalist-manipulating gifts mentioned when any of these men and women get written about. Did you know, for example, that the speaker of the House, Tom Foley (who, to be fair, happens to be respected even outside journalistic circles), is one of the Washington press corps's most helpful raconteurs? "He'll stand out on the street for a long time and just tell wonderful tales," according to a Washington columnist. "He's a straight shooter," says *Newsweek* Washington correspondent Eleanor Clift. "I don't think you have a conscious manipulator there, but he is very good with the press."

Coelho's successor as whip, William Gray III, is also popular with the press. When a reporter telephones one of Gray's staff members, the Pennsylvania Democrat will often retrieve the message slip and return the call himself. And Senator Al Gore is showing great progress at flattering the news media, lately mastering the appearance of self-effacement that

*Al Gore threw a Christmas party,  
complete with Santa Claus, to  
which he invited only journalists  
and their children*

reporters find so appealing in their public officials. His effort in this direction began in late 1988, the day after he had served as one of the "spin doctors" at a Bush-Dukakis debate. Gore turned up at a press luncheon wearing a doctor's coat emblazoned with the words DR. SPIN, just the sort of lame, inside-the-trade joke that strokes the press and inspires a sort of consensus that this politician is a good guy capable of leading the free world. Gore further demonstrated a willingness to pander to reporters by hosting a Christmas party one year, complete with

a rented Santa Claus, to which he invited only journalists and their children.

Of course, flattering reporters buys only limited favor; real devotion is reserved for the official leaker. The press's enduring reverence for Henry Kissinger can be attributed in part to his willingness to cozy up to every diplomatic reporter assigned to cover him, and to his dropping all sorts of morsels of information that he has allowed to be ascribed to "a senior official." Network newsmen Bernard and Marvin Kalb were especially grateful recipients of Kissinger's largess, and they reciprocated by writing a deeply respectful biography of their benefactor. This marriage of back scratchers reached its zenith after their biography was published, when the Kalbs suggested to their fellow journalists covering Kissinger that they should take up a collection to give a present to each crew member aboard Kissinger's plane. After the reporters agreed to do this, the Kalbs told them what the crew really wanted: copies of the Kalbs' biography of Kissinger.

But the fine art of leaking didn't end with Kissinger. Recent practitioners have included Richard Perle, the leading hawk in Ronald Reagan's Defense Department, who was widely perceived as a constant source for Washington columnists Roland Evans and Robert Novak (indeed, anyone who is ever mentioned favorably in their column is automatically assumed to be their source). Another media favorite, Oliver North, leaked to just about everyone but got burned for it when Jonathan Alter, *Newsweek's* media critic, disclosed North's chummy relationship with one of his own colleagues, former diplomatic correspondent John Walcott—much to the horror of Walcott and North. And during Ronald Reagan's first term, Jim Baker was the prime anonymous source for much, if not most, White House reporting appearing in *Time*.

Baker has been such a popular font of inside dope that *New Republic* writer Fred Barnes has called the Washington press corps Baker's "most important conquest." Donald Regan, the inept autocrat who replaced Baker as Ronald Reagan's chief of staff, said that he was "appalled" to discover how much time Baker spent with the press. Notably, when Regan attracted criticism, he found himself friendless and was hooted out of the White House. But after Baker became



the target of some rather serious conflict-of-interest allegations in February 1989—because he had held a large amount of Chemical Bank stock at the same time that he made decisions as secretary of the Treasury that could directly affect the value of his bank holdings—it was his chummy relationship with the media, some reporters think, that made the story disappear so quickly. “I think you could argue that the press went very lightly on that,” says *Newsweek’s* Clift. “Could [that story] have damaged Jim Baker?” asks Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute. “It could have, but it didn’t.”

Politicians hardly have a monopoly on press manipulation—lawyers, movie producers, real estate developers and even some journalists are equally deft at it. Among reporters who cover mergers and takeovers, lawyer Martin Lipton is particularly popular. “When the deal is closed, he knows what you want,” says a former *Washington Post* business reporter in Manhattan. “He’ll just start dictating: ‘I was in my hotel room at 7:50 p.m. There were three bottles of Bordeaux in the refrigerator when the CEO called. We met at the airport and got on his private plane....’” The *Post* scribe believes Lipton’s cooperative attitude was one reason he did not receive more criticism after reportedly charging Kraft \$20 million for his services during two weeks of takeover discussions with Philip Morris, even as he was publicly decrying the proliferation of leveraged corporate takeovers.

In Hollywood, Jeff Katzenberg, chairman of Walt Disney Pictures, is famous for his constant massaging of the press—he even gives his telephone number out to reporters and makes appointments for them to call him at home, as early as seven-thirty on a Sunday morning. After one newsmagazine reporter in Los Angeles wrote a big (and favorable) story about one of Katzenberg’s movies last year, he was placed, he says, “on the A-list. For a couple of months [Katzenberg] called me every week.” Eventually the reporter was dropped to a B-list, which earned him a monthly call, and then to a C-list, which merited just an occasional greeting. “But the other day I needed to ask one quick question,” the reporter recalls, “and I said the magic word—the name of my magazine—to his secretary,

and she said, ‘Wait a minute, let me see if I can get him on the car phone.’ In moments, there he was.”

At CBS Howard Stringer has been particularly well known for his sotto voce conversations with the press, especially Tom Shales of *The Washington Post*. The almost weekly leaks in the *Post* about the ongoing internal problems at CBS all but disappeared when Stringer left CBS News to become president of the broadcast group. Dan Rather is similarly generous toward print reporters—which might explain why few have noted that his performance as anchor has steadily deteriorated. When Grant Tinker served as president of NBC, one could usually count on any good news about the network surfacing first in John Carmody’s influential column in *The Washington Post*. Carmody’s rivals thought they could trace most of these stories back to Tinker’s right-hand man, NBC’s then-vice president for public relations, Bud Rukeyser.

Of course, the surefire way to buy a reporter’s loyalty is to pay him. That’s what Donald Trump did—or thought he did—when he collaborated with former journalist Tony Schwartz on Trump’s autobiography, *The Art of the Deal*. The book was a huge best-seller and enriched Schwartz considerably. “I know, you think I sold out,” Schwartz joked to former *New York Post* editor Jane Amsterdam when the book was on the best-seller list. “But it was for the right price.”

However, even collaborators sometimes like to show their independence. After *New York Times* architecture critic Paul Goldberger wrote that it “would probably be more accurate if he were referred to in the press as Donald Trump the casino owner, not as Donald Trump the real-estate developer,” Trump fired off an angry letter to the *Times*, in which he called Goldberger a “man of bad taste, who should not be allowed to judge architecture.” But Schwartz had a very different reaction. The day after the article appeared, he telephoned Goldberger and said, “I just want you to know, Paul, I think that was a fair and balanced piece. As you know, I’ve never been taken in by Donald myself.” Asked later about this conversation, Schwartz said he “couldn’t remember” his discussion with Goldberger. “But it was not intended for publication.”



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# UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD ANSWERS

## ACROSS

1. Fair is *just*. Attempt is *go*. Plus *E* and *S*. Put this together with 5 Across, 12 Across, 13 Across and 25 Down and you have *Just goes to show you how little we know*, which is to say, "Merely reveals our ignorance." I feel a bit guilty about expecting anyone to figure this out. I want so much for you, for us, for this puzzle of ours, and sometimes I get carried away. You would not believe the flak I get from people who say they cannot work the Un-British Crossword. Well, hell. Why should I feel guilty because *they* can't work it? But I do. Because I fall in between two awkward categories in American life: the homeless and the shameless. I hasten to say that the homeless is a much more awkward category. Once, a man came through my subway car asking for "money, food, socks, whatever you have," because he was homeless and also had AIDS. He showed the sores on his ankles, which were sockless. He was chipper, bearing up. Not laying any kind of guilt trip on us. (As a matter of fact, when he said he had AIDS, one healthy-looking youth in the car said to another, "All riiiiight.") I gave him some money. I didn't have any food on me, or any socks aside from the ones I was wearing. I should have given him those. Jesus would have. Maybe Donald Trump would have, if he had been there. But my ego wasn't great enough. It wouldn't have hurt me to give this man my socks. Jesus washed lepers' feet, right? Anyway, disciples' feet. I didn't want to deal with this man at all, to tell the truth. I know you can't catch AIDS or homelessness hand-to-hand, but you don't relish contact with *anybody* on the subway. Right after the most recent December-January holidays I was sitting in another subway car, a crowded one. Through a temporary gap in the standees I saw an old good friend, whose company I'd enjoyed just a few days before, on New Year's Eve. Our eyes didn't catch. Another glimpse and our eyes didn't catch. Then a third glimpse and they did. Clearly each of us had noticed the other on a previous glimpse, and hadn't said anything. We smiled and briefly spoke. Then she got off. Any recognition on the subway is... is unusual. *Jesus Christ, there are dying people on American subways showing their sores and asking for help!* And you complain of an inability to work *this* puzzle?

5. *Sot* backward ("retreats"), plus *how*.

9. *Storms* be reassembled ("shaking").

10. Street is *St.*, before is *ere*, zip is *O*.

26. *Ageism* rearranged ("perhaps"). "Appearances" is the definition.

27. *Renegé in* rearranged ("arrangement").

29. Remember when we used to have *-gates* all the time? Watergate, Billygate. Scandals. With regard to governmental lying. Now, I guess, the Republicans have lied so much and so blithely that the whole *-gate* concept is stretched out and flaccid to the extent that nobody can get up for it anymore.

## DOWN

1. To *jimmy* is to pry open—a lock or a window. Jimmy Carter is a recent president. Of the United States. You remember. Jimmy Carter keeps popping up in this puzzle. That is partly because he and I are both from Georgia, but mostly because I keep thinking, *Jesus Christ, the guy was lame in lots of ways but he wasn't morally lame, whereas... oh, never mind.*

2. An underwater boat is a *sub*. Juicy Fruit is *gum*. On Chinese menus, *sub gum* means with vegetables.

3. *Mel Ott* was a great player for the old New York Giants (baseball). Surrounded by *go-go*.

4. An *earl* is a noble. James Earl Carter. I mean, I know, the guy was self-righteous. But... Reagan and Bush haven't been self-righteous? They've been self-righteous *without any serious pretensions to knowing right from wrong*. Self-righteous Lite. Designer self-righteous. (I confess: I stole this concept from Sandra Bernhard, who said, "It's always so shocking to me that we're back to this racism. It's not even fundamental. It's like designer racism.") People seem to find that easier to take.

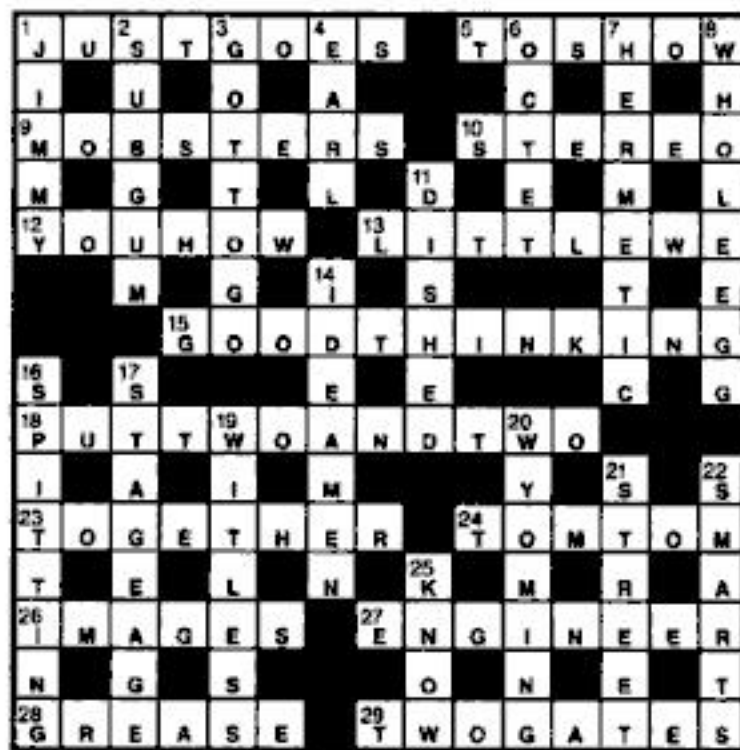
6. *E.T.* after *Oct.*

8. "Mixing," here, signals a rearrangement of the previous letters.

14. *E* (the head of *egg*) embraced by *maiden* rearranged ("loose"). Idea men are conceptualizing guys.

21, 22. *Drag* is a word for "street" (as in "main drag"), and *smarts* means "hurts."

25. The scorekeeping symbol for strikeout is *K*. Immediately is *now*. To know is to be aware of. Jesus, Jesus. Aware of what? ☺



# I THINK, THEREFORE I AM THE COOLEST

Meet Leon Wieseltier,  
The New Republic's  
resident Renaissance twit

BY JAMES COLLINS

We have all had the experience of being mistaken for the wrong person—someone, in fact, who we would rather be—and, after hesitating a moment, correcting our erring interlocutor with glum earnestness. "I'm sorry, I'm not the ship's captain. It's the hat, isn't it?" "My gallery opening, Miss Turlington? Oh, no—I'm a friend of the artist's lawyer." How much more frustrating, then, to be mistaken for the *right* person yet nevertheless, in the interest of scrupulous candor, to feel the need to amend a stranger's flattering impression of us. Such was the dilemma that one evening faced Leon Wieseltier, essayist, television personality and literary editor of *The New Republic*, as he attended a conference on some matter of high seriousness (possibly "The Very Important Thoughts of Leon Wieseltier," the essential theme of any event at which he is present). The Brooklyn-born Wieseltier, whose name is pronounced "LEE-on WEE-sel-ter," was approached by someone who knew him only from his byline and who noticed the gummy patch on his mohair lapel. "Excuse me," said this admirer, quietly awed, "are you Lay-ON Vee-ZEL-tee-AY?" Léon? The Thoughtful One considered this silently: *Forsooth, am I not Lay-ON Vee-ZEL-tee-AY,*



equally a native of Paris and Vienna as of Manhattan Beach? What a delicious irony! So, "Yes," he replied, sparing awkwardness all around, and he shook hands with the fellow, who beamed and nodded happily. We will hereafter refer to Léon as he would wish us to.

Who is Léon? (*Qui est-il, Léon?*) A question of supreme subtlety and nuance. Léon is a thinker who stands within a great tradition of expansive Jewish New York intellectuals—the tradition that runs from Lionel Abel and Lionel Trilling and Phillip Rahv on through Alfred Kazin, and that takes a little jog around Norman Podhoretz before swerving back again over by Susan Sontag and then comes to Léon himself and James Atlas, in whom it stops dead, gasps and keels over. In his late thirties, Léon possesses an overspecified education (Columbia in the late Meyer Shapiro-Lionel Trilling era, Oxford, the Society of Fellows at Harvard), but he is no grim pedant. He is a pretty sharp dresser, in fact, and wears his gray, seriously receded hair down below his collar. Léon's is a roving and restless intellect, one that does not confine itself to library stacks. No, Léon swings; Léon is an hepcat. He travels freely—with *carte blanche*, one (i.e., Léon) might say, through the varied principalities and republics of politics and history and art and culture that others may enter only briefly, if at all. Israel, Max Weber, Rambo, poverty, the Midgetman, Edith Wharton, the golden age of New York college hoops, Czeslaw Milosz, Nicaragua, ballet, the Soviet Union, rock 'n' roll, Brancusi, medieval theology—Léon has them covered. It would be an interesting experience to try to explain something, *anything*, to Léon. The Negro Leagues? Ann-Margret? Sind? Your boat? No matter; Léon will quietly, sensitively correct you, with a gentle shake of his silver locks.

But why not allow him to speak for himself?

Human concupiscence has an un-Edenic character, which was Baudelaire's great point in his essay in praise of make-up....Like make-up, lingerie is a triumph of culture over nature....You must be passive, as you are before a beautiful painting, when you are before a beautiful woman. The gaze of pleasure...lingers over the fishnet on the fingers....Sweetness surrounds the stern

actions of the masquerade. And when it is done, and the spent players remove the masks, and the costumes crumble to the floor, this also is ravishing.<sup>1</sup>

Léon, as we see, redefines *know-it-all*.

When the intellectual history of our era is written, Léon's contribution will most likely be completely ignored, so it is important to try to understand him properly while we can. He has produced many, many articles, essays, reviews and what one (you know who) could call *feuilletons*. Virtually all of these, many thousands upon thousands of words, have appeared in one magazine, Martin Peretz's *The New Republic*. Like a favored contract player at a movie studio, Léon has a steady income and choice roles. His one book, *Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace*, is in fact a reprint of a 23,000-word piece he wrote for *The New Republic*, the longest article the magazine has ever run.

*The New Republic* has its very own About Men column, the Diarist, and this has provided the setting for Léon's most memorable work. Equally significant were the similar but more freewheeling columns Léon wrote a few years ago for *Vanity Fair*, most of them under the, uh, *nom de plume* Tristan Vox. Léon is a master of this form: in a mere 1,000 words, no one else can display nearly as much false humility, pretentiousness and insipidity. Most impressive are the prose globules of which these columns consist. "He is no friend of language whom it does not summon to play or to pleasure," Léon has written. If language could speak, it would say to him, "Please go away. And stop *pestering* me!"

Léon, stern and vital, denounces yuppies:

I do not understand the buying of clothes not for reasons of beauty. I do not understand the building up of bodies not for reasons of concupiscence [*here we go again*]. And I do not understand all this talk about "feeling good." Feeling good is simply a sign that you are not paying attention. (*The New Republic*, January 28, 1985)

Léon the fearless Rat Pack egghead celebrates Sinatra:

The songs Sinatra sings...represent a

<sup>1</sup> From a 1986 column on lingerie written for but not published by *Vanity Fair*.



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Nanc—Skrink skrink, eeee veee, bwa bwa, pfffttt! Have a skankin' birthday! Love Marc, Marth and JJ.

Chris R.—Happy B-day. Put SPY down, study law!—T

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style of feeling that can help to correct the agitation that is an important part of the prevailing ideal of private experience....I daresay that Emma Bovary would have liked Frank Sinatra a lot. But I daresay, too, that Emma Bovary was exemplary, a great heroine of the limited life. Banality is frequently the quarry of beauty. (*Vanity Fair*, July 1985)

(Somehow you feel that all this would have been news to Ava Gardner.)

Léon lights two cigarettes at once:

The Stinger is the consummate cocktail: a coincidence of opposites. Like the mingling of cock and tail, the mingling of brandy and crème de menthe represents the refinement of coarse natural materials into a prospect of happiness....A perfect penetration is always difficult to achieve....The brandy tells of culture; the crème de menthe tells of nature [see above].<sup>2</sup>

And Léon's finest hour: "On Saturday night Suzanne Farrell was to dance *Serenade*. The word reached me almost as soon as I came to the city."

Even when he is not writing a column expressly intended for personal observations, Léon shares his diary entries with us. Typically, he uses the Artless Parenthesis for this purpose. Léon adds the human note, for example, in a review of a book by Robert Nozick: "(I remember being warned, as a student, against the sterility of philosophical logic by one of philosophical logic's masters. When my eyes failed to light up as he spoke of the differences in the performance of certain adverbs in certain types of sentences, he seemed relieved, and I knew I had a friend.)" Mawkish and vain! Maestro!

But wait, conscience huffs, *what of Léon's serious, important work?* As an editor he has made a brilliant career of inviting academics to write lengthy book reviews. *What of his in-depth exegeses of numerous crucial questions?* Henry Kissinger perhaps said it best, when he provided a blurb for Léon's sadly out-of-print book about nuclear weapons. He called it "one of the most thoughtful essays that I have read on a difficult subject." Yes, Léon is thoughtful. He has thoughts. He even has ideas—sound, worthy ideas. In the book, for example, his ideas about deterrence

were fine. They were...former *New Republic* writer Charles Krauthammer's ideas. Léon has interesting and worthwhile ideas on other subjects too. They are

1. Israel is good but should treat its victims humanely.
2. Capitalism is good but should treat its victims humanely.
3. Art is good but should treat its victims humanely.

A reader should always refer to this list when tempted to begin the world's most exhausting steeplechase: an article by Léon divided by Roman numerals.

When we read Léon, we enter a strange and espresso-fueled world, a world in which the words *authenticity* and *the Other* and *existential* are used as a matter of course, where Jones and Jones Jr. are always Jones *père et fils*, and where *Huckleberry Finn* is a "bildungsroman." The names of Marx and Freud are spoken often here. What is this world? It is a Nichols and May routine. It is 1957. And along with Léon, a second cultural figure inhabits this eerie landscape. He is Woody: the Other.

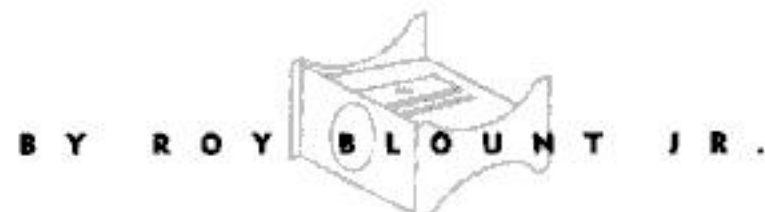
In a recent *Diarist* column, Léon savagely attacks Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors*; the filmmaker is often a target for Léon's rage. "It is a matter of honor to hate this film. There is not a frame of it that fails to degrade, to debase, and to demean something precious. It is the work of a consumer, a tourist, a peacock, a counterfeiter, a voyeur, a coward, a philistine, a creep." Would not Herr Doktor Freud have something to say about all this? Who, we might ask, walks out of a disappointing performance at the Metropolitan Opera, as Léon tells us he did, and seeks solace at...a serious Woody Allen movie? And then is shocked and enraged that the movie is...bad? Does our *doppelgänger* pursue us, Léon, or do we seek him?

Léon and Woody: intellectual name-droppers, unlikely sexual braggarts, smug moralizers; each jealously guards his highbrow credentials while wearing a lowbrow heart on his sleeve. Don't Léon's interests simply mirror Woody's eclectic and very irritating list in *Manhattan* of what makes life worth living (Satchmo, Kierkegaard...)? Two concupiscent Brooklyn boys, one overeducated, the other self-taught, and both burdened with wisdom. Leon Wieseltier is the Woody Allen of Washington. ▀

BY CHRIST'S

# EGO!

*If common sense doesn't work,  
how about aerobic guilt?*



"I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments and common sense," wrote Thomas Paine in 1776 in *Common*

*Sense*, which helped spark the American Revolution. A great deal of water has gone over the dam since then. In Paine's day, for instance, there was no Book of the Month Club. Now there is one, and a plain-speaking American statesman has branded it a pinko tool. The *Daily News* reported recently that Richard Nixon had refused to allow his new memoir to be a BOMC selection. "He's always thought that the [BOMC] board has a pervasive left-wing bias," explained a Nixon aide.

*The Washington Monthly*, on the other hand, strives for evenhandedness. "Forget liberal. Forget conservative. Think common sense," it suggested recently in an article—billed on the cover as **WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE FOURTH AND FIFTH AMENDMENTS**—by Paul Savoy, a former prosecutor and law professor. What Savoy had to say, in essence, was, *Only the innocent should have a right to silence*.

That's commonsensical, all right. And since, as anti-gun-control people say, only the guilty shoot people (culpably), the crime problem suddenly clears up—all we have to do is take away all those *guilty* people's guns and rights, and life will be easier for the innocent and the police.

Of course, say you are a guilty person and you get stopped for questioning, and the police advise you that if you're innocent, you have the right to remain silent, but if you're guilty, you don't. Wouldn't you be inclined to remain silent?

Fortunately, you aren't guilty. If you

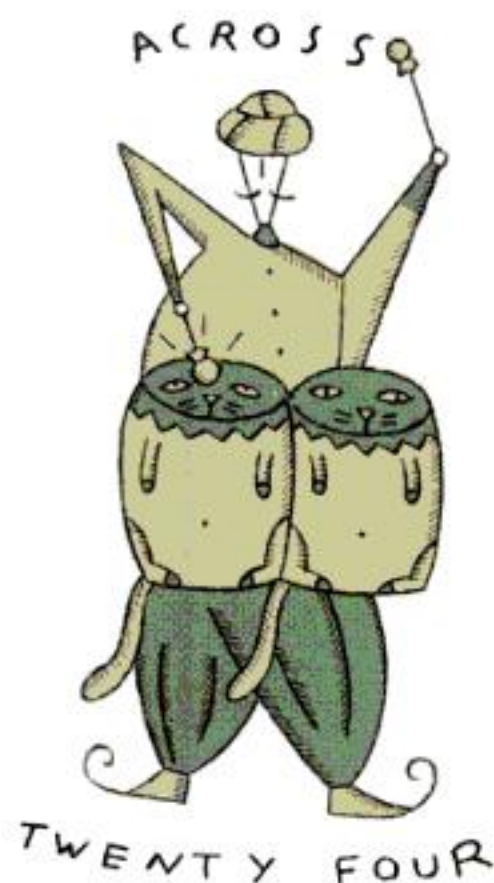
<sup>2</sup> From a 1987 promotional booklet of cocktail recipes.



were, I wouldn't be associating with you. In fact, you're probably the type who's happy to talk to the police, because what do you have to hide? Which puts the police in a bit of a bind, because although you look innocent, *you're not remaining silent*. So just in case, the police lock you up. Which may make you feel guilty. Which, paradoxically, may make you stop talking. "Aha!" say the police.

In the eighties, of course, no one felt guilty. But in the nineties guilt may be coming back. Perhaps a new form of guilt: guilt that is self-improving. The Democrats have got to come up with *something* the Republicans haven't co-opted.

Aerobic guilt. Kicking oneself so vigorously as to lose weight and tighten the gluteus muscles. Tossing and turning.



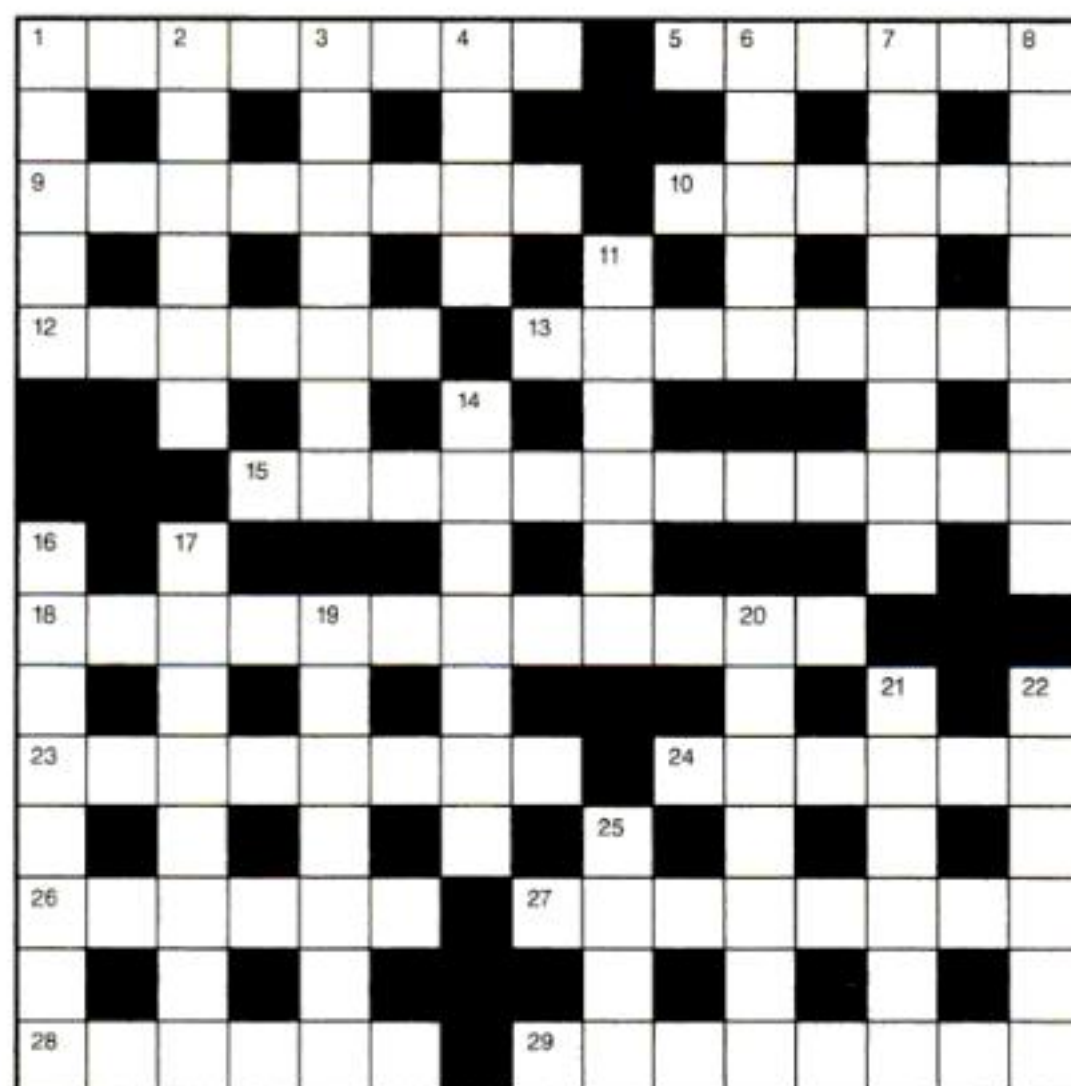
Slapping the forehead, *whap* two three four. Dashing outside and thrusting money upon the more deserving. Weeping, wailing, gnashing one's teeth.

Donald Trump claims he does in fact feel some guilt because he is so rich while others are homeless. But the most interesting exchange in his March *Playboy* interview is the following:

TRUMP: Every successful person has a very large ego.

PLAYBOY: Every successful person? Mother Teresa? Jesus Christ?

TRUMP: Far greater egos than you will ever understand.



I have dashed off a little spiritual that might be sung by a person who understands as Trump understands:

There's an ego on my Savior  
That you would not believe,  
You would not believe,  
Oh, you would not believe.  
There's an ego on my Savior  
That only I believe —  
That is why He's where He is today.

If fusions of guilt and exercise or egotism and Christlikeness lack broad popular appeal, how about religious ecstasy and weapons testing? In *Street News*, a newspaper sold by homeless people, the actress Lisa Bonet shared an epiphany:

Once in Los Angeles, Lenny [her husband] and I were outside and a missile was shot off. It must have been a test of some kind. We didn't know what it was, but there were these incredible magical colors in the sky... Everyone was outside going, "Oh my God, you've got to see this." And Lenny said, "If that was from a missile, can you imagine how beautiful it will be when God's taking care of us?"

*Common Sense* sold 100,000 copies, even without the BOMC. But after the Revolution, Paine's career plummeted. He was imprisoned in France for opposing the Reign of Terror. Back in the U.S., where he'd popularized the rights of man and the rule of law, he was accused of atheistic beliefs. He lived out his years in obscurity on a farm in New Rochelle. It takes more than simple facts and plain arguments to stay in tune with America.

## ACROSS

1. Fair attempt, east to south—with 5, 12, 13 and 25—merely reveals our ignorance. (4,4)
5. Drunk retreats—how? (2,4) (See 1.)
9. Storms be shaking organized bad guys. (8)
10. System speaking with forked tongue in street before zip. (6)
12. Second person with Native American greeting. (3,3) (See 1.)
13. Small, west to east. (6,2) (See 1.)
15. Sound reasoning from benign slim sovereign. (4,4,4)
- 18, 23. How to get the sound of four hands clapping? Assemble the obvious evidence. (3,3,3,3,8)
24. Two male cats get Indian drum. (3-3)
26. Appearances of ageism, perhaps. (6)
27. Renege in arrangement with person who drives train. (8)
28. In ancient country, it's said, squeaky wheel gets this. (6)
29. Brandenburg and Water-, or Heaven's and contra-. (3,5)

## DOWN

1. Pry open recent president. (5)
2. Underwater boat

3. If you must leave, you have old Giant Mel surrounded by dance. (3,2,2)
4. Noble was recent president's middle name. (4)
6. After the tenth month, unearthly creature becomes a group of eight. (5)
7. Sterile dissident takes in a thousand. (8)
8. Go *wee!*, L.G., mixing the yellow with the white. (5,3)
11. Di took off and shared slander. (6)
14. Egghead in embrace of loose maiden produces conceptualizing guys. (4,3)
16. Shish kebabing and salivating expressively. (8)
17. How old it says you are in *Playbill*, or the Wells Fargo era. (5,3)
19. What a court without a jester is: dumb. (7)
20. Ow! My gin spilled in a western state! (7)
- 21, 22. What you need to know to survive in the city: drag hurts. (6,6)
25. Be aware of a strikeout immediately. (4) (See 1 Across.)

Answers on page 96.





At the Hyatt Regency, giggly right-wing representative Newt Gingrich delights onlookers—or himself, anyway—with his hilarious on-the-sly joke about the square footage of the first lady's face.



**BLACK-TIED** On the eve of beating the IRS out of several hundred million dollars, art and crewneck-sweater collector Si Newhouse marches with his wife, Victoria, into a dinner at MoMA, grimly contemplating the next few impossibly uncomfortable tuxedo-bound hours.

# party

## POOP

**THE ONLY PHOTO WE'VE EVER SEEN OF A KENNEDY SERVING FAST FOOD** Bobby Kennedy Jr. with hamburgers at a Hard Rock Cafe movie-premiere party. ▼



**FIRST JESTER** Now that his expert upholstery of the first lady's frame has made him a fixture on the Washington social scene, designer Arnold Scaasi has become the Jerry Zipkin of the Bush administration. At a dinner-dance thrown in his honor by the Girl Scouts of the USA, the wee dressmaker and his dance partner, Mary Tyler Moore, maintain stiff upper lips despite flurries of *faux* dandruff.



At a benefit for the School of American Ballet, the president's more manifestly twitty-looking brother Jonathan hit the dance floor in an attempt to show off some of that famous Bush sparkle (complete with supersuave finger snapping); his date, however, upstaged him with a set of very mod neo-King Tut moves.



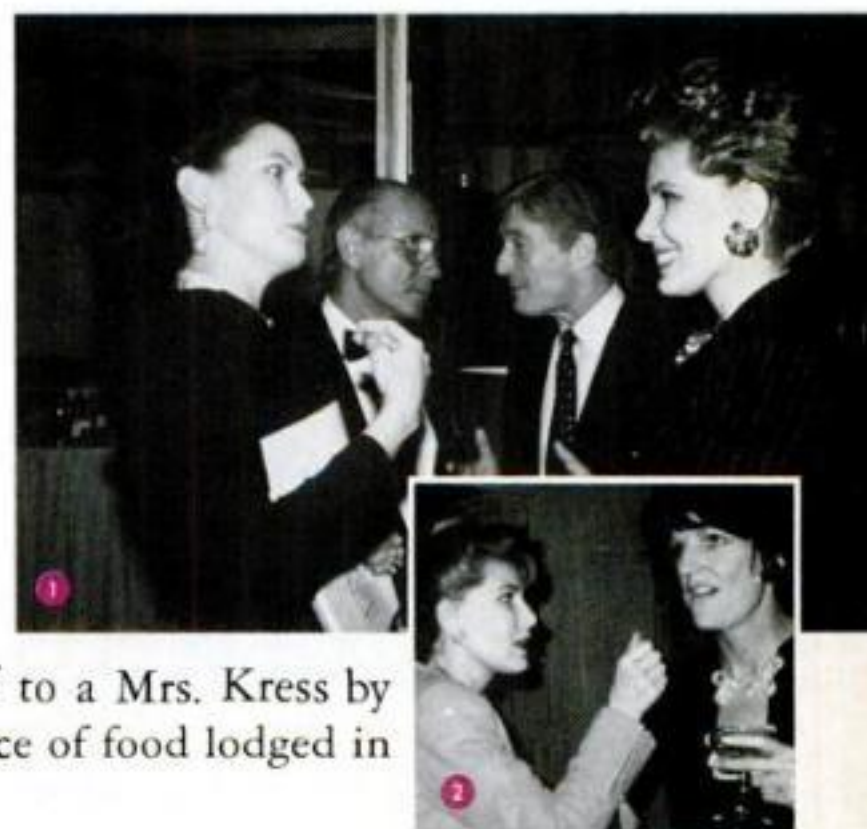
Taking a tip from one of his Manhattan counterparts (SPY's 1988 Ironman runner-up, Carl Bernstein), much-in-demand party guy Lee Atwater seems to have discovered that the best way to spread his lipless grin all around town is to distribute cardboard cutouts of himself to well-known hosts. At a fundraiser, "Lee" lights up the evenings of actress-singer Carol Lawrence and socialites Marianne Carter, Sarah O'Mera Sigholtz and Allaire Williams.



**HI! MY NAME IS...** In a secluded corner at an important function, John Sununu, White House chief of staff and meanest guy in Washington, practices friendly conversation openers.



**STEFFORD WIFE-LY DEVOTION** Postfeminist lalapalooza Georgette Mosbacher evidently thinks that a power wife should be seen and not heard. (1) While her virtually invisible husband, Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher, discusses the national interest with right-wing dirty-book writer Arnaud de Borchgrave, she smiles mutely at De Borchgrave's wife, Alexandra. And (2) at a party to celebrate the redecoration of someone's apartment, the cosmetology-obsessed Mrs. Mosbacher endears herself to a Mrs. Kress by apparently reaching over to remove a piece of food lodged in her teeth.



**TOUGH JOB, BUT SOMEBODY'S GOT TO DO IT** While pretending to listen attentively to His Royal Highness Saudi prince Selman Bin Abdulaziz, Dan and Marilyn Quayle look for an opportunity to slip away and spit out the weird-tasting Arab drink they have been instructed by aides to sip. ▶



A tanned, healthy Senator Edward Kennedy catches a quick nap between trips to the bar at the White House Correspondents' Dinner.



At what appears to be a black-tie clinic in physically forceful public speaking, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan gives Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan a few pointers on using the right arm and fingers to make a point. ▼



▶ Future president Bill Bradley sports the ersatz-seventies layered look (special-interest T-shirt over cotton button-down shirt) that campaigning politicians have made their own. The less goofily dressed but finally more goofy-looking man at Bradley's side is Maryland congressman Tom McMillen.



At an awards dinner for Senator Moynihan, *Washington Post* style writers Lloyd Grove and Mary Hadar enjoy a hilarious old *Post* tradition: executive editor Ben Bradlee doing his trademark Deep Throat imitation. ▶





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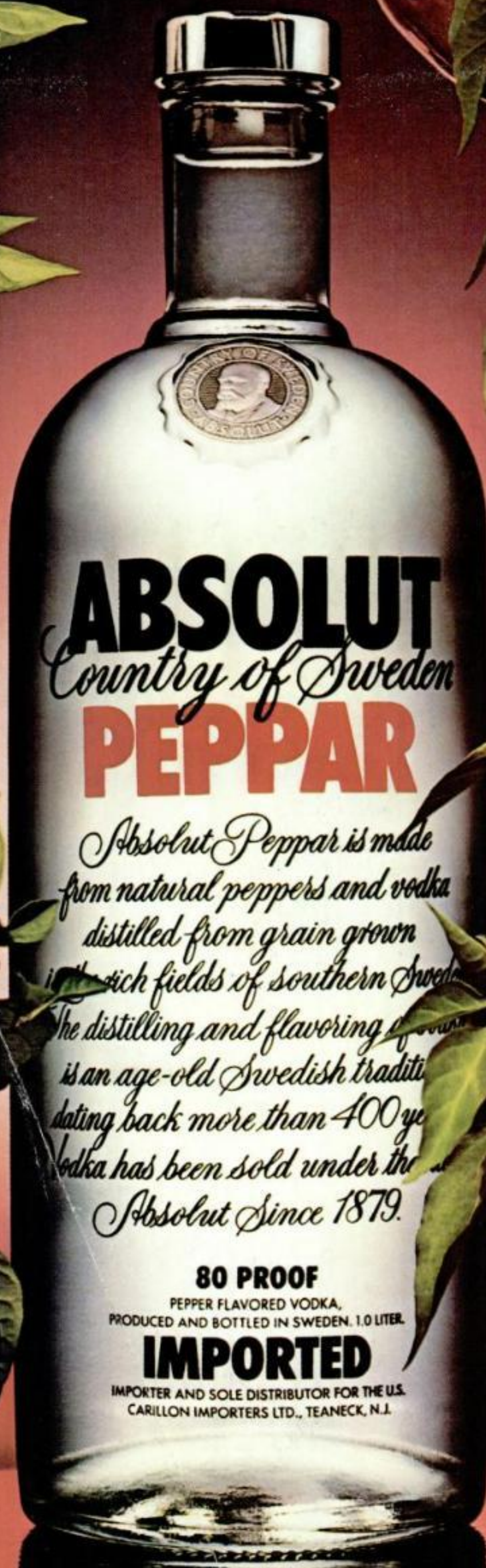
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***Is it socially acceptable to eat the tails of deep-fried shrimp? Also, when speaking of blow drying your hair in the past tense, would you say blow-dried or blew dried or possibly blew dry? These are my two greatest dilemmas.***

**Andrea  
Madison, WI\***





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